

1-1-1992

## **An evaluation of the deputy principals' leadership development program**

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**AN EVALUATION OF THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**BY**

**Ronald F. Chalmers    B.A., Dip. Ed., Dip. Ed. Admin.**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Award of**

**Master of Education**

**at the Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University**

**Date of Submission: 1st September 1992**

## ABSTRACT

The Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program (DPLDP) was researched and developed by the Calgary Board of Education from 1983 to 1987. It was conducted for the first time in Western Australia when deputy principals from schools in the Narrogin Education District participated in the program during the period 1989-91.

This study is an evaluation of the DPLDP. It was designed to determine whether there is justification for the continued use of the program as a means of enhancing the instructional leadership capacities of deputy principals in the Narrogin Education District.

This research is located within the naturalistic paradigm. It can best be described as a qualitative case study based mainly upon ethnographic methods of data collection. The organisation and analysis of the data, however, was structured largely by utilising Stufflebeam's CIPP (context, input, process, product) framework of program evaluation and a typology of instructional leadership developed from a review of the literature. This typology presents instructional leadership as a process based on three components: vision, information and action.

The data for this evaluation was collected during a twenty two month period between April 1989 and November

1990. A variety of data gathering techniques was used. In depth, semi-structured interviews and participant observations generated most of the data. Document analysis and unstructured, informal interactions provided supplementary material.

Data validation formed an integral component of the research design. A thorough and wide-ranging validation process involving the participants was utilized to check the accuracy and relevance of the research findings.

The major conclusions of the study, that emerged within the CIPP framework of program evaluation and the typology of instructional leadership, were:

1. Participation in the DPLDP leads deputy principals to examine their role in schools, and builds a commitment to their role as instructional leaders.
2. The DPLDP has the potential, more than other available programs examined, to meet the professional development needs of deputy principals in key areas associated with instructional leadership.
3. Collegial support is the single most important element of the DPLDP for the development of deputy principals as instructional leaders.
4. The DPLDP can be implemented successfully in the Narrogin Education without significant modifications.

Based on these results, and other subsidiary findings of the study, it was concluded that, on balance, there is justification for the continuation of the DPLDP in the Narrogin Education District.

"I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text."

Signature

Date 14th DECEMBER 1992



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**SECTION 1**  
**SETTING THE SCENE**

## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

In 1987 a report entitled "Better Schools in Western Australia: A Program for Improvement" was released (Ministry of Education 1987). It announced plans to re-structure the system and presented schools with a new set of basic tenets upon which to base their operations. It also outlined a six year plan to make schools more self-determining and accountable. And by presenting a 'blueprint' for radical change, it provided the impetus for a system-wide review of the state school system. This report is commonly known as the Better Schools Report or simply as Better Schools.

As indicated below, two key strategies promoted in the Better Schools Report for empowering schools to become more self-determining were increased control over resources and a substantial say in educational direction setting.

Since 1987, policies have been put into place requiring schools to establish school decision making groups, to prepare school development plans, to implement financial management procedures and to address a wide range of social justice issues. The school development planning policy was

the first, and perhaps the most significant, policy initiative. Schools were informed that the primary purpose of development plans was to set the educational direction for the school in the medium to long term. Each year since 1987 schools have been given an increase in funding to implement school programs and ensure that staff are equipped to implement the school's development plan.

Commentators differ in their assessment of the impact of the Better Schools Report on schools and students. The degree of real change in schools, towards the vision outlined in the Report, appears to vary widely from one school to the next, and perhaps from one district to another.

It is generally agreed, however, that implementation of the provisions advocated by Better Schools has necessitated a wholesale review and analysis of practices and inter-relationships between components of the system.

One part of the Ministry of Education's operations that has been the subject of analysis throughout the period 1987-91 is staff development. Developments in this important area typify the complexities involved in moving towards a school system based upon devolved decision making. Issues such as defining responsibilities, allocating resources, quality control, equity, evaluation and accountability have been the subject of lengthy discussions in schools, in district offices and in the central office of the Ministry.

Responsibility for staff development was, and remains, a pivotal issue. Who is responsible, in a devolved system, for teacher development? Is it the sole responsibility of the principal or is there a role for district and central offices? Who is responsible for the professional development and training of principals and deputy principals?

As the 1980s drew to a close many of these questions about staff development remained unanswered. Yet, the need for clarity and direction had never been greater. Quality staff development initiatives were needed to equip teachers and school administrators with the knowledge and skills to be able to meet the challenges set by the Better Schools Report.

For school administrators the need for training and development was especially high. Increased responsibility for educational direction setting infers increased control over the instructional program. For the first time principals and deputy principals were handed direct responsibility for planning, resourcing and evaluating the instructional program for all students in their school.

This shift in responsibility brought with it the need for school administrators to exercise leadership in the educative process that, in years gone by, had been assigned to other levels of the system.

To many observers the success of the Better Schools reforms depended on the ability of individual schools to develop a capacity for educational leadership in the broadest sense of the concept. For an individual school to operate successfully within the new devolved system, school leaders needed to utilize effective management and administrative skills to influence the instructional program.

In 1988-89 many school administrators lacked opportunities to develop the skills necessary to perform this leadership function.

At the commencement of the 1989 school year, officers from the Narrogin District Education Office grappled with the related issues of identifying appropriate professional development for school administrators and clarifying responsibilities for providing such staff development.

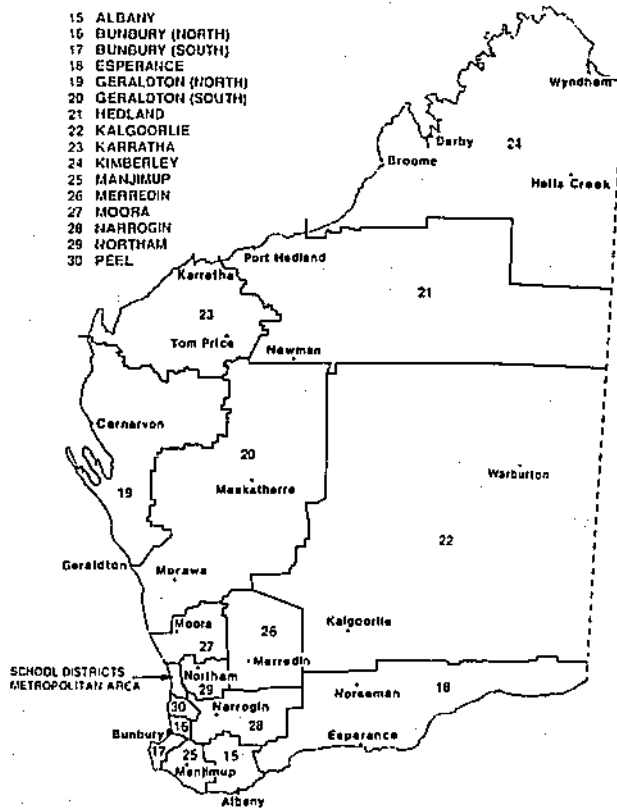
The Narrogin Education District is one of twenty nine education districts within the Western Australian Ministry of Education. It is located in the south-west of the state, in a rural, predominantly wheat-sheep farming region (see Maps 1 and 2).

The district comprises twenty seven schools, the majority being small primary schools. Table 1 contains details of these schools and the placement of deputy principals within them.



The district's education office is located in Narrogin. A small staff provides administrative and advisory support to teachers and school administrators within the district. The District Superintendent of Education is the representative of the Ministry of Education in this part of the state.

MAP 1. WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS (COUNTRY AREAS)

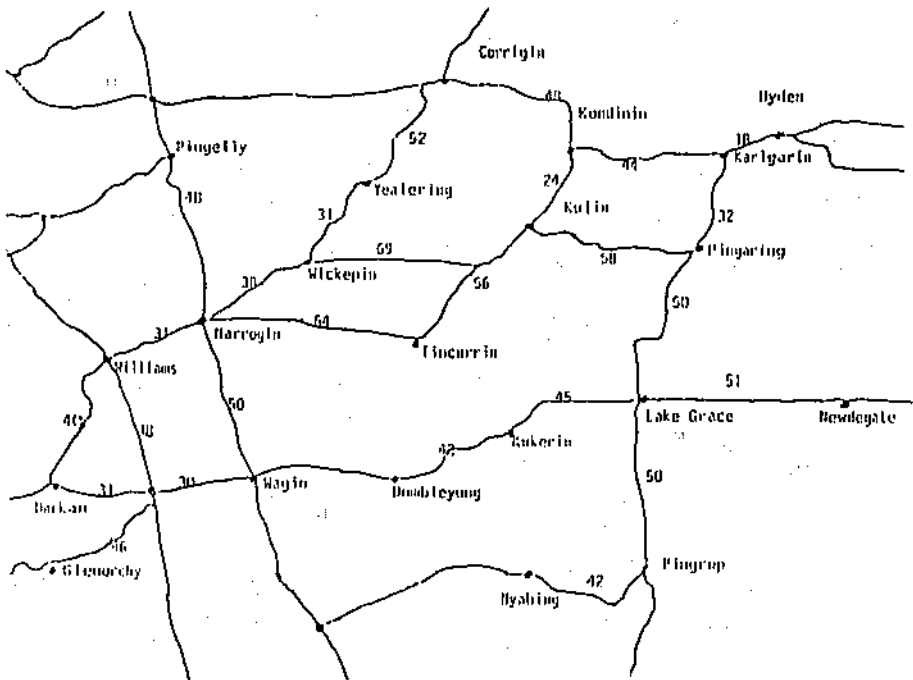


The Narrogin District, like many other country education districts, is characterized by a transient teacher and school administrator population. Teachers typically remain in these schools for two or three years. Principals and

deputy principals often seek transfers after three or four years<sup>1</sup>.

During the period 1987-1989 deputy principals from the Narrogin Education District indicated to the District Superintendent that district level support was required to provide for their professional development needs. The superintendent became aware of this request by the direct approach of some deputy principals, written submissions from the district deputy principals' association, and information received from principals in the district.

MAP 2. LOCATION OF SCHOOLS IN THE NARROGIN EDUCATION DISTRICT



1. As an example, between 1987 and 1991 every school in the Narrogin District experienced a change in principal.

Specifically, deputy principals were seeking a program of on-going professional development that would support them in their current positions, and prepare them with the knowledge and skills required for future promotional positions.

As the demands of the deputy principals became clearer, the district superintendent and district officers began the process of identifying a professional development program that would be offered to deputy principals in the district.

**TABLE 1**  
**Narrogin District Schools**

SCHOOL TYPE	NUMBER OF DPs
1. Primary schools	
East Narrogin	2
Glenorchy	0
Hyden	0
Karlgarin	0
Kondinin	0
Kukerin	0
Narrogin Education Support	0
Narrogin	2
Newdegate	0
Nyabing	0
Pingaring	0
Pingrup	0
St. Matthew's	0
Tincurrin	0
Wandering	0
Wickepin	0
Williams	0
Yealering	0
2. District High Schools	
Corrigin	3
Darkan	1
Dumbleyung	1
Kulin	1
Lake Grace	1
Pingelly	3
Wagin	3
3. Senior High Schools	
Narrogin Senior High	2
Narrogin Agricultural College	1

In October 1988, officers from the Narrogin office were informed of the existence of the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program (DPLDP) by a member of the Calgary Board of Education who was visiting Western Australia at that time. The program was similar, in many respects, to the I/D/E/A Principals' In-service Program that had been introduced to Western Australia in July 1988.

Early in the 1989 school year a decision was made by the Narrogin superintendent to offer the DPLDP to deputy principals in the district. The offer was made on the basis that all costs associated with the program be borne by the schools involved and that the district office would arrange for two trained facilitators to conduct the program. The offer was extended to all deputy principals in the district. Fourteen out of the twenty deputy principals accepted it. The program commenced in the district in March 1989.

Although the optimum size for a DPLDP group, as stated in the program materials, is between six and ten participants, district office staff were reluctant to exclude any of the fourteen deputy principals. All fourteen commenced the program.

Three deputies chose to withdraw from the program at the conclusion of the two-day "getting started" session. They were unable or unwilling to make a commitment to a twelve month program of professional development as presented in this introductory session.

The group size was reduced to ten in August 1989 when one member accepted an appointment to a private school outside the Narrogin District. Another group member was transferred from the district at the end of the 1989 school year. The nine remaining members became the core of the first Narrogin DPLDP group and they form the focus of this study.

Eight members of the group were male. The two deputies that left the program during the latter part of 1989 were female.

Six of the group members were trained in Primary education, two were Secondary trained. The other deputy had spent most of his career in Agricultural Education. Only one deputy had spent more than two years at his current school before the commencement of the DPLDP.

The Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program was researched and designed by the Calgary Board of Education during the period 1983 to 1987. It was conducted for the first time in Western Australia when deputy principals from schools in the Narrogin education district commenced the program early in the 1989 school year.

This study is an evaluation of the DPLDP as it has operated in the Narrogin Education District over the past three years. It is important to note that the deputy principals involved in the program chose to extend the two year

program into a third year. The rationale for this is discussed in section three of the thesis.

The need to evaluate the program in terms of its suitability for Western Australian conditions has been recognised by a number of stakeholders in this initiative. These include the Narrogin District Superintendent of Education, the principals and deputy principals in the Narrogin district, and the International Institute for Policy and Administrative Studies (IIPAS) which is the body that was associated with the introduction of the Deputy Principals Leadership Program to Western Australia. Other parties likely to be interested in the findings of the evaluation are the Ministry of Education, the Centre for Educational Leadership, deputy principals' associations and other school administrators.

At a time when the Ministry of Education is examining a range of issues that relate to the provision of professional development services to school based personnel, an evaluation of an internationally recognized program, operating for the first time in an Australian setting, is timely.

## Chapter 2

### THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program is a one-hundred hour program that occurs over a two-year period, beginning with a two-day "getting started" session, followed by sixteen, once-a-month, full day sessions. Groups undertaking the program are restricted in size in order to foster the collegiality deemed essential for mutual problem solving and support which are important components of the program.

The stated goal of the DPLDP (1987) is:

To help deputy principals improve their professional competencies so that they can, in turn, contribute to improved school programs for students.

Within this broad goal, the program has been structured to address five specific objectives. These objectives, stated in the DPLDP program materials (1987) as positive outcomes, are:

1. Collegial support group outcome:  
Members of the collegial support group provide assistance and encouragement to one another as they engage in professional development, reflections and a dialogue on the principles and practices of learning, and in examining effective staff development.
2. Personal professional development outcome:  
The deputy principal, as a member of a collegial support group, designs, implements, and evaluates

a personal professional development plan to increase his/her leadership capability.

3. Continuous improvement outcome:  
The deputy principal adopts continuous improvement as a way of life and accepts personal responsibility for his or her role in the improvement process.
4. Reflections on learning outcome:  
The deputy principal examines what is known about the way children learn, then examines instructional practices to determine the ways in which those practices reflect what is known.
5. Staff development outcome:  
The deputy principal examines the principles of adult learning, a research based model of in-service, effective staff development, and a professional development planning model.

The purpose of the two-day "getting started" session is to facilitate and promote group interaction through getting acquainted activities which include:

- \* the introduction of effective group process skills
- \* emphasis on open communication
- \* processes to develop understandings of collegiality
- \* activities to strengthen interpersonal trust and support
- \* the development of a firm sense of program direction, and
- \* encouragement of an awareness of member interdependence and responsibility for group continuance.

During the two days deputy principals engage in collegial support building, consensus reaching, "in-basket" problem solving, outcome clarification and self assessment activities centred around leadership styles and leadership characteristics.



The monthly sessions are based on adult learning principles. In workshops deputy principals plan personal professional development and school improvement projects that they can implement in their schools. During future sessions progress on these plans is shared and constructively reviewed, and then further aspects of these plans are developed for implementation and subsequent collegial assistance and review. In this way the group acts as a medium through which deputy principals can exchange ideas, gain peer support, and critique individual plans.

Each monthly session is structured around a sequence of processes and group-generated activities based on the five anticipated outcomes. Also, each session has a particular theme or set of agenda items against which past, present and future plans can be researched and developed<sup>2</sup>.

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2. Details of themes and agenda items are presented in Appendix 1.

## Chapter 3

### THE PROBLEM

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The central question underlying this research study can be formulated as follows:

Is there justification for the continued use of the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program as a means of enhancing the instructional leadership capacities of deputy principals in the Narrogin Education District ?

To answer this central question the research study will address four subsidiary questions.

1. To what extent are the program's objectives reflective of the professional development needs of deputy principals in the Narrogin district ?
2. Is there justification for the continued use of the Deputy Principals Leadership Development Program in preference to alternative professional development programs ?
3. Do modifications need to be made to the program for successful implementation in the Narrogin district? And if so, what are these modifications and why are they needed?
4. What are the major outcomes - positive and negative, as well as intended and unintended - of the DPLDP?

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM**

The funding available to the Narrogin District Education Office to support professional development programs for school administrators is limited. At a time when government instrumentalities are coming under increased pressure to account for the way they allocate resources, both financial and human, a thorough evaluation of the DPLDP will assist decision makers to determine the future of the program in the Narrogin district.

In a similar way, by considering the findings from this study, schools will be better able to make judgements about the value of investing limited resources to permit deputy principals to participate in the program.

The fourteen Narrogin deputies are the first group of Australian school administrators to participate in the DPLDP. A comprehensive evaluation will function as a guide to other districts (and perhaps other school systems) contemplating implementation of the DPLDP collegial support group concept.

Cultural and organisational differences can lead to problems when attempts are made to transfer educational or training programs from one country to another. The experiences of the Narrogin deputies will highlight the difficulties, if any, of operating the DPLDP in a Western Australian context.

More specifically, this evaluation will test out the capacity of the DPLDP to meet important professional development needs of deputy principals in a rural education district. There are characteristics of country districts (remoteness, professional isolation, travel costs) that distinguish them from districts in the Perth metropolitan area. The study will consider the idiosyncrasies of the Narrogin district and present the outcomes of the DPLDP as they emerged in this rural situation.

In a broader sense this study is significant because it will add to the research literature on evaluation in the area of collegial and peer support groups. Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s researchers in the USA (Daresh, 1982; Hyland, 1985; Kirschenbaum and Glaser, 1979; La Plant, 1986; and Sharp, 1983) and Australia (Adie, 1988) have been examining the effectiveness of collegial groups as a mechanism for delivering professional support and development to school administrators. The results of a Western Australian study will add another dimension to this area of research.

Currently, deputy principals within the state education system are offered a wide range of professional development programs from a number of different sources. The Professional Development and Training Unit of the Ministry of Education has recently been formed to develop and present courses for teachers and administrators. This unit will compete with tertiary education institutions, The Centre for Educational Leadership, the Australian Institute

of Management and other organisations for a share of the professional development dollar. In 1991 a professional development consortium was established with resources from tertiary institutions, the Ministry of Education and various other training and development organisations. The consortium aims to provide an infrastructure for developing and conducting courses for teachers and school administrators.

The introduction of the Federal Government's Training Guarantee Levy has made professional development and training a growth area for many government and non-government organisations. Numerous companies have been created to capitalize on this expanding market. There are clear indications that schools, with increasing control over their resources, are being targeted as part of this market.

Faced with a range of alternative ways to obtain training and development for staff, school decision makers will be better placed to make informed selections if they have access to reliable program evaluation data. This study will provide such data about the DPLDP.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Throughout the study a range of particular terms will be used. When they are, the following definitions will apply.

**Collegiality** - a bond or commitment between two or more professionals established to provide mutual

support and professional advancement.

**Concerns Based Adoption Model (C-BAM)** - a model of change implementation developed during the 1970s and 1980s by the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at The University of Texas at Austin.

**District Education Office** - offices of the Ministry of Education established in January 1987 to provide a local base for a District Superintendent and support staff (professional, administrative and clerical).

**District High School** - a school with students from pre-primary to Year 10. The vast majority of Western Australian district high schools are located in rural areas of Western Australia.

**District Superintendent** - a level 8 public service position within the Ministry of Education. District Superintendents are responsible for monitoring all schools in an education district and for managing a district education office.

**DPLDP Facilitator** - a member of the DPLDP collegial support group with responsibilities for co-ordinating group meetings and facilitating group processes.

**Instructional Leadership** - The process of making decisions and taking action to influence the teaching-learning processes so that desired student outcomes are achieved.

**Leadership** - "... the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers." (Gardner, 1990)

**Management Information System** - the monitoring process undertaken to determine the nature and extent of achieving the school's stated purpose and performance indicators.

**Principles of Learning** - contemporary accepted beliefs about the way people learn.

**Professional Development** - the processes by which

educators obtain the skills, knowledge and abilities required to meet the demands of their position as defined jointly by the employing education system and by themselves.

**School Development** - the processes by which schools plan and implement programs and procedures designed to move the school towards a pre-determined purpose.

**School Development Plan** - the mechanism through which government schools state their intentions for ensuring effective outcomes within the resources available.

## **DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

This study is limited to one DPLDP collegial support group. The members of this group were deputy principals from primary and district high schools in the Narrogin Education District. They volunteered to join the DPLDP program at the commencement of the 1989 school year.

All data for this study were collected during 1989, 1990 and 1991. The research findings will be drawn only from the first and second years of the program (1989 and 1990). The Narrogin DPLDP group chose to extend the program into a third year, with significant changes to the original program structure. This third year (1991) has not been examined as part of the study.

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Data regarding the outcomes of the DPLDP were gathered from individual participants, rather than from teachers and principals. The perceptions of the group members may not

be the views of school personnel.

The Education Officer from the Narrogin District Education Office was one of the facilitators of the Narrogin DPLDP group. The same officer gathered observation and interview data for this study. This officer's susceptibility to bias, in accurately recording data for this study, must be acknowledged. The measures taken to minimise that danger are outlined in Chapter 5.



## **SECTION 2**

### **RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

## **Chapter 4**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The following review of the literature provides a background to support the selection of a qualitative, case study approach for this evaluation of the DPLDP, and examines the issues that will need to be addressed in the methodological design of the study.

#### **NATURALISTIC EVALUATION**

A silent specific revolution is taking place in the field of evaluation. As is the case in many fields of scientific endeavour, educational evaluation is experiencing a change in direction. A critical component of this change is a shift in the paradigms underlying the method and aim of research. (Fetterman, 1988 p. 17)

The shift referred to by Fetterman is away from traditional positivist approaches and towards qualitative evaluation techniques. Guba and Lincoln (1982) explain this development by highlighting the inadequacies of the rationalistic or scientific paradigms when applied to social and behavioural inquiry. They point out that the scientific model has been conspicuously unsuccessful in the area of educational evaluation and that research data

obtained has been used sparingly by the education community.

Doubts about the utility of the scientific model have given momentum to the development of naturalistic inquiry methods. As a generic term, naturalistic inquiry came to describe many of the alternative approaches to evaluation that gained prominence in the 1970s as a reaction to the more traditional forms of evaluation when these proved "inappropriate for understanding the complexity of curriculum reform." (Simons 1987 p. 21)

Stake (1978, p. 6) captures the essence of this new approach by explaining that,

... naturalistic inquiry signifies a commitment to studying programmes in their social contexts, the use of qualitative methods of inquiry such as unstructured interviewing, direct observation and historical/dramatic reconstruction, and forms of reporting that allow readers to generalize for themselves, utilizing naturalistic generalization.

By comparing the assumptions underlying the scientific and naturalistic paradigms, Guba and Lincoln (1982, p. 57) highlight the limitations of the former in many areas of social/behavioural inquiry (see Table 2).

The pure or hard sciences pre-suppose a single, unchanging reality. The social and behavioural sciences cannot be constrained by a single reality. As Filstead (1979, p. 36) explains, "there are multiple realities ... Individuals are conceptualized as active agents in constructing and making sense of the realities they encounter."

**TABLE 2**  
**Axiomatic Differences Between the Rationalistic and Naturalistic Paradigms**  
 (Guba and Lincoln, 1982, p. 237)

SUBJECT OF AXIOM	PARADIGM	
	Rationalistic	Naturalistic
Reality	Single, tangible, convergent, fragmentable	Multiple, intangible, divergent, holistic
Inquirer/respondent relationship	Independent	Interrelated
Nature of truth statements	Context-free generalizations-nomothetic statements-focus on similarities	Context-bound working hypotheses - idiographic statements - focus on differences
Attribution / explanation of action	"Real" causes; temporally precedent or simultaneous; manipulable; probabilistic	Attributional shapers: interactive (feedforward and feedback); non-manipulable, plausible
Relation of values to inquiry	Value-free	Value-bound

Rather than aiming for scientific truths that can be tested and replicated in all situations, the naturalist approach seeks to describe and explain the realities that exist in particular situations at a particular point in time. Wolf and Tynitz (in Guba and Lincoln, 1981 p. 78) describe this as,

... attempts to present "slice-of-life" episodes documented through natural language and representing as closely as possible how people feel, what they know, and what their concerns, beliefs, perceptions, and understandings are.

Naturalistic inquiry is about maximizing interaction between the inquirer and the subject in ways that lead to "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973) and "working hypotheses" (Cronbach, 1975). Furthermore, it is concerned with clearly defining both the context and the timing of particular inquiries in ways that enable judgements to be made about the transferability of research findings.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1982, p. 235) naturalistic inquiry has a number of characteristics to recommend it for use in social research and evaluation,

... it (naturalistic inquiry) offers a contextual relevance and richness unmatched by any other paradigm. It displays a sensitivity to process virtually excluded in paradigms stressing control and experimentation. It is driven by theory grounded in data; the naturalist does not search for data that fits his or her theory but develops a theory to explain the data.

They assert that naturalistic approaches take full advantage of the not inconsiderable power of the human-as-instrument, and claim that this provides a more than adequate trade-off for the presumably more "objective" approach that characterizes rationalistic inquiry.

Advocates for the use of naturalistic methods can draw attention to the inherent strengths of this paradigm. They also face threats and criticisms levelled at the approach from various sources. Some critics argue that advocates of an anti-positivist stance have gone too far in abandoning scientific procedures of verification and in giving up hope of discovering useful generalisations about behaviour.

Cohen and Manion (1987, p. 37) pose the question, "Are there not dangers in rejecting the approach of physics in favour of methods more akin to literature, biography and journalism?"

In short, criticism of descriptive naturalistic studies tends to focus on two areas: validation and universal application.

During the 1970s and into the 1980s, evaluators utilizing descriptive case study methods had to defend their work against those who argued that the ability to generalize is essential for decision making in education. Prior to the 1970s the predominant view of educational evaluation was one based on the scientific paradigm, and conducted "almost exclusively by experimental psychologists steeped in the null hypothesis" (Simons, 1987, p. 9).

The situation changed towards the end of the 1980s and into the 1990s because,

... there is now agreement that their (educational evaluators) primary task is to elucidate the values and/or effects of a particular project, programme, or policy at a particular point in time, in a particular place. Evaluation is, in other words, a study of the idiosyncratic. (Simons, 1987, p. 12)

Validity in naturalistic inquiry is a complex subject. Although a detailed analysis of all aspects of validity is not possible within the bounds of this study it is important to present the scope of the matter and highlight the aspects of significance to this evaluation.

The development of research methods appropriate to the naturalistic paradigm raises important questions about the processes for validating data. Traditional methods of data validation are rejected as inappropriate. Strict adherence to the constructs of internal validity, external validity, objectivity and reliability, as presented in the scientific model of inquiry, undermines the basic tenets of the naturalistic approach and renders it unworkable in the field of educational evaluation. What observers need is a set of criteria to make judgements about the trustworthiness of evaluations based on naturalistic methods.

Guba and Lincoln (1982, p. 246) present a useful translation of the scientific validity constructs into workable criteria in the naturalistic paradigm. The relationship is simple and direct (see Table 3).

**TABLE 3**  
**Validation Criteria: Rationalist and Naturalist Paradigms**

<b>RATIONALIST</b>	<b>NATURALIST</b>
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability

(based on Guba and Lincoln, 1982, pp. 246-247)

A brief examination of the four terms in Table 3 will clarify this approach to validation.

Credibility can best be determined by having the subjects of an inquiry validate the data collected and the findings of the evaluation. By returning to the source of the data, namely, the minds of those involved, the researcher can test the accuracy of the study. Guba (1982) suggests triangulation, persistent observation, prolonged engagement and peer debriefing as strategies to enhance credibility.

The transferability of findings from one evaluation situation to another should be a consideration of the naturalistic inquirer. Audiences for evaluations can make judgements about the transferability of findings if sufficient attention is given to the context of the inquiry, and if the evaluation is supported by "thick description" (Geertz, 1973).

Naturalistic inquiries, by definition, defy replication. Unlike research in the rationalist paradigm, where the ability to repeat experiments with identical results time after time is a methodological necessity, the naturalist instinctively and purposefully changes and adapts a design to maximize the value of the inquiry. "Stepwise replication", "overlap methods", and "dependability audits" are offered by Guba (1982) as effective methods for addressing the issue of dependability.

Confirmability of data is a powerful asset of the naturalist. Rather than attempt to establish the objectivity of the inquirer in any naturalistic study,



added attention is paid to confirming the data collected and analyzed by the inquirer. House (1980, p. 24) emphasizes the importance of impartiality and the dangers of objectivity:

The analysts thought objectivity was sufficient to ensure superiority and influence. More often it means irrelevance. Objectivity sought to deal with interests by excluding them. What is needed is impartiality which deals with interests by including and balancing them.

The complexities of the validity issue become confounded when the methodologies of naturalistic inquiry are adopted. Researchers operating in the scientific paradigm have had centuries to shape and refine their practices in ways that ensure reliability and objectivity. The tools of trade for the naturalist are still being developed, and for this reason are open to constructive criticism.

Writers such as Argyle (1978) and Bernstein (1974) who have supported a scientific approach to social investigation, focus criticism at the naturalistic methods of inquiry. They question the validity and usefulness of techniques such as unstructured interviews and participant observations. According to Argyle (1978, p. 122), "If sophisticated ethnological studies of behaviour are not good enough, are participant observation studies any better ?" Argyle goes on to remark,

... and what of the insistence of interpretive methodologies on the use of verbal accounts to get at the meaning of events, rules and intentions ? Are there not dangers ? Subjective reports are sometimes incomplete and they are sometimes misleading.

The critical first step towards ensuring the trustworthiness of evaluations that rely on qualitative data is to become aware of the threats to validity. Once these threats are identified they can be dealt with or compensated for in the research. Kennedy (1984) identifies four threats to the validity of qualitative data that are relevant to this evaluation of the DPLDP in Narrogin. Kennedy (1984, pp. 367-68) asserts that,

One glaring threat to natural validity is the obtrusiveness of the inquiry itself. The very investigator's presence on the scene and the question he or she asks can heighten participants' self-consciousness about their own activities, ... and may motivate them to alter their testimony.

A reliance on verbal testimony poses a second threat for investigators. This occurs when investigators rely on interviews to the exclusion of observation of behaviour as a reliable source of data.

The inherent ambiguity of the language used by the participants under investigation is another potential problem for the investigator. Clarification of ambiguous verbal statements may often not be possible.

Finally, much of the testimony gathered by qualitative techniques can be hearsay evidence. It may not always be possible to verify such data.

The development of qualitative techniques poses challenges for researchers involved in evaluating educational programs. While it was entirely appropriate that a

naturalistic research design be developed and utilized for this evaluation of the DPLDP, it was clear that issues associated with reliability and validity would need to be addressed. The research design developed to evaluate the DPLDP capitalized on the positive elements of the naturalistic paradigm. The researcher was in the position to interact intensively with the subjects of the inquiry. As a consequence, thick descriptions were made and working hypotheses were developed. The credibility of the research findings was achieved through the implementation of a rigorous participant validation process.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The next component of the literature review explores the concept of instructional leadership, and develops a typology of instructional leadership characteristics to be used in evaluating the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program.

One of the most significant findings to emerge from the school effectiveness research is the relationship between instructional leadership and school success. The correlation between strong instructional leadership and school effectiveness has been demonstrated in numerous studies (Lipham, 1981; Hallinger and Murphy, 1986; Bosert et al., 1982; Andrews and Soder, 1987). Issues central to the debate about instructional leadership include: the role of school administrators - managers or instructional

leaders; the most effective ways of exercising instructional leadership; and the question of who should exercise instructional leadership in schools.

#### SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS: INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS OR MANAGERS ?

Recent changes in the structures and philosophies underpinning school education in Australia have focussed attention on the role of the principal. The specific question being asked is: are principals managers or educational leaders? Since the release of the Better Schools Report this issue has been canvassed widely in Western Australia. For example, Hamilton (1990, p. 7) observes that,

There is a suspicion amongst some principals that the thrust of "Better Schools" is to convert the principal into a school manager. Much of the new language of education is the jargon of management; corporate plans, human resources, performance indicators, executive teams ... And so the role of manager is seen to be competing with the role of educational leader for the principal's time. Principals are frustrated in applying their educational wisdom and expertise to improve the learning environment by the demands to manage money, the people and the site.

In other systems the manager versus instructional leader debate has been on-going during the past decade.

Goodlad (1978), in an analysis of the situation in the United States, suggests that since the 1950s the role of the principals has increasingly become one of managing non-

instructional activities. This development has been attributed to the increase in the size and complexity of schools. Bredeson's (1985) study of principals' work activities supports the view that community and organisational expectations pressure school administrators to adopt a management perspective in order to guarantee the maintenance of all aspects of school operations. He (1985, p. 45) concludes that,

... the overwhelming dedication to continuance of the current processes in their schools was less a matter of personal choice or characterization and more a matter of community, organizational and professional role expectations. Little evidence that the principal could be anything other than that of the ultimate maintenance manager, or the person in the organization who sees and understands the total process and is responsible for everything that goes on.

Numerous other studies (Martin and Willower, 1981; Strong and McVeain, 1986; Willower and Kmetz, 1982) confirm the primary role of the principal as manager. Ploghoft and Perkins (1988) go as far as to suggest that the management responsibilities of the principal have become so overwhelming that their instructional role should be stripped from them and dealt with by others.

During the 1970s and into the 1980s academics and training institutions tended to affirm this management focus. Principals were influenced by academics espousing the indispensibility of organizational theory, administrative behaviour, and politics and economics of education. Smyth (1983, p. 45) contends that the focus on management has

"been at the expense of a sound understanding of teaching and learning theory".

The call for school administrators to assume more and more instructional leadership duties stems from the effective schools research. A plethora of research studies (see for example, Manasse, 1982; Purkey and Smith, 1983; Clark, Lotto and Astuto, 1984; Rutherford, 1985; Heck, Larsen and Marcoulides, 1990) clearly indicates the importance of instructional leadership for the teaching-learning process in schools.

Commenting from a Canadian perspective, Leithwood (1988) observes that principals can exercise significant influence on the basic skills achievement of students mainly through their commitment to instructional leadership.

In a recent Australian study (Heck, Larsen and Marcoulides, 1990) a theoretical causal model was used to test how elementary and secondary school principals influence student achievement through the frequency of certain instructional leadership behaviours. The findings from this study were clear:

The causal relationship proposed and tested in this research study ... provided empirical support for the Bosset et al. (1982) model, indicating that through the frequency and effectiveness of implementing instructional leadership behaviour identified, principals can have direct effects on the achievement level of their schools. (Heck, Larsen and Marcoulides, 1990, p. 120)

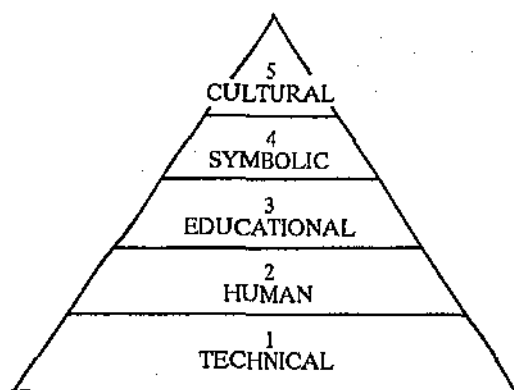
Edmonds (1979) found that schools in decline were characterized by an absence of instructional leadership; more effective schools had administrators who demonstrated instructional leadership capacities.

The research evidence appears to place school administrators in a no-win position. They are facing ever-increasing managerial responsibilities yet the importance of functioning as instructional leaders is undeniable. As we enter the 1990s the call has come from many quarters for school administrators to blend the two responsibilities and "manage for productive student outcomes" (Stronge, 1990, p. 1).

Sergiovanni (1984) asserts that excellence in schooling is achieved through a combination of generic management processes and symbolic and cultural leadership forces. His well known Leadership Forces Hierarchy (see Figure 1) illustrates the relationship between these aspects of leadership.

For Sergiovanni (1984, p. 165) the first two forces represent the management aspects of school leadership and it is these forces that have "dominated the leadership literature in recent years". However, it is only when these management aspects of the leadership function are combined with the higher order forces (educational, symbolic and cultural leadership) that a school leader can move a school towards excellence. A balance should be

**FIGURE 1**  
**Sergiovanni's Leadership Forces Hierarchy**



achieved between management and educational leadership. Sergiovanni (1984, p. 163) supports the view that, "the technical, human and educational forces of leadership provide the critical mass needed for competent schooling". A deficit in any one of these three upsets this critical mass, and less effective schooling is likely to occur.

In their Practitioner's Guide to School Improvement, Dufour and Eaker (1987, p. 53) support the merging of the management and leadership functions. They write:

We believe that recent research findings on effective organisations, effective leaders and effective schools call for a new definition of the principalship, one that recognizes the four major roles of the principal:

1. promoter and protector of values
2. empowerer of teachers
3. instructional leader
4. manager of climate.



They claim that an effective principal must be both a leader and a manager. As a leader the principal must promote and protect the values of the school, empower teachers, and monitor and evaluate instructional effectiveness. As a manager the principal must work to maintain a climate that is both productive and satisfying.

Consideration of the school administrator's management and instructional leadership roles as an either-or situation is seen by some educationists as counter-productive. Stronge (1990, p. 1) rejects the either-or stance. He maintains that the management function and instructional leadership are not mutually exclusive. Rather, "the proper use of school improvement and the role of the principal is not middle management versus instructional leadership; ... the focus should be managing for productive schools.

The current Western Australian situation is no different. Hamilton (1990, p. 7) states that,

The dichotomy is a false one. The way principals can have maximum impact on the quality of education in the school is through the application of management skills to improve the learning environment.

Anderson and Pigford (1987) suggest that, to re-structure their working lives to enhance their leadership role, school administrators should become proactive rather than reactive, become goal oriented rather than activity oriented, and invest time and energy to build up the knowledge and skills required to operate as instructional leaders.

Elimination of the leader/manager distinction may lead overworked school administrators to claim that they are now being asked to perform two roles instead of one.

Principals and deputy principals who feel that their working hours are more than adequately filled performing essential management tasks may be less than enthusiastic about taking on a new set of tasks related to instructional leadership.

A discussion of the competencies required to exercise instructional leadership is presented in the next section of this thesis.

#### **EXERCISING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS**

The designers of the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program claim that their program is an effective means of increasing the competencies of deputy principals as instructional leadership. A clear and precise outline of instructional leadership is required to evaluate the program.

Definitions of the term instructional leadership abound. They tend to be supported by lists of characteristics or competencies needed to fulfil the promise of this concept. For the purposes of this study it is necessary to arrive at a workable definition and develop a typology of instructional leadership characteristics.

Educationists vary widely in their interpretation of the term instructional leadership. Avila (1990, p. 53) observes that definitions range from the "very narrow traditional roles of clinical supervision to broad-ranging lists construing almost everything a principal does as instructional leadership".

Narrow interpretations of the concept (see Acheson, 1985; Bailey and Wicks, 1990), that focus solely on the school administrator as teacher supervisor, fail to take account of the management activities needed to ensure that effective teaching-learning processes occur in classrooms. They fail to link decisions made at the whole-school level and learning outcomes for students.

Conversely, all-encompassing definitions of instructional leadership can de-emphasize the importance of management for effective student outcomes (see DeBoise, 1984, p. 15). Avila (1990) suggests that the search for a universally acceptable definition is an academic extravagance. The real value for a school comes when administrators, their superiors and teachers spend time arriving at their own definition. She advises school administrators to carefully work out for themselves a clear concept of the role of an instructional leader and to share this notion with staff members and evaluators. In this way principals and deputy principals can promote a common understanding of what instructional leadership entails in their particular situation.

What, then, constitutes effective instructional leadership? Some educationists offer lists of leadership characteristics (Dufour and Eaker, 1987; Peterson, 1987; Hall, Rutherford, et al., 1984). Others proffer lists of competencies (Keefe, 1990), leadership tasks (Donmoyer and Wagstaff, 1990), or domains of instructional leadership (Bossert, et al., 1982).

Despite these different approaches, opinion converges on the main components of instructional leadership. The three components to emerge from the literature are vision, information and action.

#### **VISION: THE CRITICAL FIRST STEP**

In recent times much has been written about the relationship between vision setting and school excellence. Commentators on the effective schools research agree that creating, articulating and gaining commitment to a vision of what a school should be, are essential first steps in moving towards excellence.

In a much quoted work, Bennis and Nanus (1985, p. 103) emphasize the primacy of vision:

If there is a spark of genius in the leadership function at all it must be in the transcending ability, a kind of magic, to assemble - out of all the variety of images, signals, forecasts and alternatives - a clearly articulated vision of the future that is at once single, easily understood, clearly

desirable, and energizing.

The rationale for vision setting is clear. It is much easier to lead if both the leader and the led have a firm understanding of where they are going to.

Early in the 1990 school year the Ministry of Education released a major policy statement entitled School Development Plans: Policy and Guidelines. Schools were directed to develop and communicate a shared vision by means of a statement of school purpose. These statements were to be "expressed clearly and succinctly and be understood by everyone in the school community". The policy stressed the importance for schools to develop statements that were expressed in terms of the school's aspirations for its students' education.

The focus on student achievement is consistent with current research (Barth, 1990; Dufour and Eaker, 1987; Jacobsen, 1987). Instructional leaders should aim to develop a vision that accentuates the teaching-learning process and signifies to the school community that learning is the school's *raison d'etre*.

Research also shows that when school leaders and other members of a school community begin to accept a shared vision, a set of central values emerge to guide day-to-day school operations (Beare, et al., 1989). Dufour and Eaker, 1987, p. xx) point out that,

Effective organizations have shared values that reflect the vision of the organization.

These values help individuals to understand how they are expected to behave and serve as a mechanism for sanctioning or proscribing behaviour.

Another important aspect of the instructional leader's role in vision setting for school improvement relates to the change processes adopted by school leaders. A vision, no matter how noble, may never be realised unless appropriate processes are employed to move the school from its current state to the preferred state - that is, the vision. Beare, et al., (1989, p. 118), in an analysis of the research findings in this area, conclude that,

The vision of a school leader also includes a mental image of a possible and desirable process of change through which the preferred future state will be achieved.

This is supported by Caldwell (1987, p. 30) when he states that "they (leaders) should have a vision of the change processes as well as a vision of the goal."

A consensus of opinion is emerging amongst researchers and educationists about the importance of vision setting for effective instructional leadership. In the long term, the potential of sound instructional programs and effective staff supervision can only be realised when they are focused by a clear and shared sense of purpose a school. All other aspects of instructional leadership are dependent upon the establishment of a clearly articulated and accepted school vision.

## MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

As an instructional leader, the principal must inquire and question. He or she is collecting information from a variety of sources. This information is used to plan and to make decisions. Sources of information include teachers, students, parents, and auxiliary personnel. Test scores, report cards, records, surveys, observational data, and enrolment figures can provide useful information. (Hansen and Smith, 1989, p. 15)

If vision is the critical first step in the instructional leadership process, and if decisive leadership action moves a school towards the vision, then information is the link between the two. Metaphorically, information is the oil that ensures the smooth operation of the school machine.

Action taken in the name of instructional leadership should be supported by accurate and relevant information about what is happening in the school. The challenge for school leaders is to develop and refine systems for managing information so that decision making efficiently links action to vision.

In recent years schools and school systems have been experimenting with procedures for managing school information. Computer technology has been used to develop systems to process complex data about curriculum inputs and student outcomes. Computerized reporting packages have also been trialled in Australian schools.

Systems for managing information allow school leaders to perform the dual functions of implementing an appropriate instructional program and monitoring school performance. Western Australian government schools are now required, as part of a formalised school development process, to design and implement management information systems. The purpose of these systems is to gather and process school information necessary for decision making and accountability.

The move towards formalised, computer assisted information systems has raised questions about the type of information that school leaders should be gathering, and about the appropriateness of data gathering techniques. A synthesis of the views of contemporary educationists would have instructional leaders utilize information about the school curriculum, student assessment, and teacher performance (see, for example Ploghoft and Perkins, 1988; Stronge, 1990; Bailey and Wicks, 1990).

Rutherford (1985) suggests that effective instructional leaders should spend a good deal of time in classrooms observing teaching methods and student performance. On a related theme, Keefe (1990) encourages principals and deputies to select a manageable number of indicators about which information can be gathered. In his view, an astute leader will select a mix of curriculum and non-curriculum indicators that will give a balanced assessment of school performance. Examples of curriculum indicators include achievement test scores, student outcome profiles, and the



percentage of students from all socio-economic backgrounds selecting advanced courses. Non-curriculum indicators may include the number of incidents of vandalism or the number of students referred for discipline.

Schools are complex organizations. A vast amount of information can be gathered and analyzed. The danger for school administrators lies in selecting inappropriate information for analysis (Peters, 1987). Peters (1987) advises school leaders to become "information sensitive" in their interaction with staff, students and other members of the school community. The key to becoming information sensitive is finding the correct mix of what, when and how to gather and analyze information about the school's operations. When this correct mix is achieved school leaders become well placed to take appropriate leadership action.

#### **LEADERSHIP ACTION**

A well founded school vision coupled with an effective management information system forms the framework for instructional leadership in a school. The potential in such a framework can only be realised, however, if school leaders take appropriate action to change what is happening in their school when such change is required. It is the action component of instructional leadership that tests the mettle of a school's leadership. Without a preparedness on the part of the school administrators to act decisively and

appropriately, the school as a whole will struggle to fulfil its vision.

The logical precursor to instructional leadership action is knowledge of curriculum content and pedagogy. Teachers must be confident that the changes or modifications they are required to make to their teaching practices are supported by sound knowledge of the teaching-learning process. Keefe (1987) asserts that instructional leadership must be supported by content competence, methodological competence, and supervisory competence. This simple three part framework synthesizes and supports the views of many researchers in the area (see, for example, Carter and Klotz, 1990; Bailey and Wicks, 1990; Blank, 1987).

When principals and other school leaders fail to acquire and then demonstrate these competencies a vacuum is created that can lead to teacher insecurity. Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990, p. 24) have observed that principals often ignore the instructional aspects of their schools' programs and justify their behaviour with claims that "teachers know best and don't really need their assistance". They go on to claim that,

Studies of effective and ineffective schools challenge this justification, as have teachers we have interviewed. Few complain about principals interfering with their teaching. The most common complaint is that principals have no interest in classroom activities.

Successful instructional leadership is dependent upon the knowledge base of the leader(s) in the school. School

administrators cannot hope to act upon the deficiencies exposed by their information systems if they are unfamiliar with current pedagogical theory and practices. Lesourd and Grady (1988, p. 64) state that "a principal who exercises leadership for various outcomes must be knowledgeable about alternative models".

Knowledge alone will not ensure school effectiveness and move the school towards its established vision. School leaders must be prepared to act decisively to correct or re-focus teaching programs in order to achieve desired student outcomes. To exert leadership directly upon the instructional process, the principal should analyze teacher behaviour during instruction and assist teachers to modify behaviour to meet their instructional goals. (Lesourd and Grady, 1988)

Effective principals are able to translate vision into action. Conversely, Rutherford (1985, p. 31) observes that "less effective principals frequently stated that because all of their teachers were professionals they left them alone to do their jobs".

An investigation of the various models of teacher supervision is beyond the scope of this literature review. Processes for teacher-supervisor interaction have been researched extensively in recent times (Holly, 1983; Acheson and Gall, 1980; Bellon, Eaker, Huffman and Jones, 1976; Cogan, 1973). The merits and shortfalls of intensive clinical supervision techniques have been compared and

contrasted with less formal methods of teacher supervision. Regardless of the specific techniques employed, the importance of the supervisory process cannot be underestimated. As Hansen and Smith (1989, p. 14) conclude,

Supervision is perhaps the single most important thing a principal can do to show that he or she is involved, committed, and informed concerning classroom teaching practices.

It is clearly impossible for principals to function as instructional leaders unless they are willing to monitor teaching by venturing into the arena where instruction takes place, the classroom. In addition, they must be sufficiently knowledgeable about effective teaching practices in order to provide teachers with meaningful feedback on their instructional strategies and methods. (Dufour and Eaker, 1987, p. 82)

Staff development is another aspect of school operations in which decisive instructional leadership action can be demonstrated. However, research indicates that, in many instances, staff development initiatives are ineffective (Caldwell and Marshall, 1928; Hansen and Smith, 1989; Joyce and Showers, 1980).

Schools benefit most from the resources they allocate to staff development when the information generated by the school's information system is used to identify specific staff development needs (Hansen and Smith, 1989). An effective system will highlight specific areas in which

teacher development is required to increase teacher knowledge and skills. In this way school leaders can take decisive action to increase the likelihood of achieving desired student outcomes in accordance with the school vision.

In a study of seven Californian schools Hallinger and Murphy (1983) observed that "effectiveness" was higher in schools where professional development of staff was seen as an integral outcome of the instructional leadership process.

The allocation of the resources (financial, human and other) available to a school can be used as a significant instructional leadership function (Caldwell and Spinks, 1988). Scheduling, budgeting, equipment purchases, staff allocation and building programs can have direct and substantial influences on instructional programs for students. Astute leaders can maximize the utility of resource management to promote the school vision and move the school towards it.

Perhaps in no other area is the link between the managerial and the instructional leadership roles of school administrators more apparent as it is in the area of school resource management. Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) offer two examples of this link:

One ... management task that can have a tremendous impact on a school's instructional program is budgeting. Effective instructional leaders conscientiously use budgeting decisions to maximize the likelihood that students will

learn.

Scheduling almost always affects what happens to students in classrooms. The impact can be either positive or negative. Principals who want to be effective instructional leaders are aware of the educational impact of scheduling decisions and work to ensure that the impact is positive. (1990, p. 29)

In the final analysis, instructional leaders are change agents. They make decisions and implement changes on the basis of the information they gather about their schools (Keefe, 1987). A critically important aspect of instructional leadership is the ability and willingness of school leaders to re-focus school priorities in response to findings from the school's information system. This process ensures that staff members continually focus their attention on moving towards the school vision and allocate resources to this end.

In summary, a suitable definition of instructional leadership must incorporate three elements: (1) the decisions and actions of the leader, (2) the links between these actions and the instructional process, and (3) the relationship between instruction and student achievement. On the basis of the literature review so far, instructional leadership in this study will be used to refer to,

Decisions made and actions taken by a school leader to influence the teaching-learning processes in ways that will achieve desired student outcomes.

This section of the literature review can be summed up in the form of a typology of instructional leadership that will be used for this evaluation (see Table 4).

**TABLE 4**  
**Instructional Leadership Typology**

**1. VISION**

- Developing a shared vision for the school
- Establishing a curriculum focus for the vision
- Articulating the vision to the staff, students and community
- Establishing a few shared central values
- Determining change processes to achieve the vision

**2. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

- Establishing a relevant management information system
- On-going curriculum evaluation
- Systematic student assessment
- Monitoring teacher performance
- Effective reporting to students and parents

**3. ACTION**

- On-going development of the knowledge and skills necessary to improve instructional leadership (curriculum and instruction)
- Close involvement in the teaching-learning process
- Preparedness to act, to intervene, to take corrective action
- Use of the management information system to focus and implement staff development
- Management of school resources to reflect school priorities
- Re-focusing school priorities in response to findings from the management information system.

**THE ROLE OF THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL IN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

From the literature it is clearly the case that school effectiveness is enhanced when the principal assumes the role of instructional leader (see, for example, Manasse,

1982; Ploghoft, 1988; Purkey and Smith, 1983; Gaynes, 1990.

In recent times, however, the move towards participatory decision making and shared leadership has brought into question the role of principal as the sole instructional leader. Researchers and principals are realising that instructional leadership should be a shared responsibility involving other school administrators and teachers (Peterson, 1989; Gardner, 1990; Selim, 1989; Gaynes, 1990). Barth (1988) suggests that a principal should work to develop a community of leaders in which students, parents, teachers and administrators take on legitimate leadership roles.

The move towards an increase in "leadership density"<sup>3</sup> is supported by Beare et. al (1989, p. 153):

... it is clear that a school where excellence is the goal will seek a model for instructional leadership which will have this focus (high leadership density) and which can shape the role of a number of people in addition to the principal.

Understandably, some school principals may be reluctant to share leadership responsibilities with other members of the school community. Reluctance may stem from anxiety about the consequences of shared leadership. Loosening the reigns may lead to unpredictable outcomes. Others may be

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3. Sergiovanni (1987, p. 122) defines leadership density as "the extent to which leadership roles are shared and the extent to which leadership is broadly exercised".



unwilling to make changes to an autocratic leadership style that has served them well in times gone by.

The concept of simultaneous loose-tight properties developed by Peters and Waterman (1982) may promote higher levels of leadership density in schools. According to this management concept, an organization identifies a few central values that will give direction to the activities and decisions of all its members and then demands rigid adherence (tightness) to these few non-negotiable values on the part of its members. At the same time, however, it promotes and encourages individual innovation and autonomy (looseness) in day-to-day operations. This approach allows leaders of an organization to emphasize the importance of control and freedom at one and the same time.

How, then, is the role of the deputy principal changing and being shaped by this move towards shared leadership? Specifically, what instructional leadership functions should be assumed by the deputy?

Moving into the 1990s the image of the deputy principal that is emerging in the Western Australian context is becoming clearer. The deputy principal will be required to assume legitimate instructional leadership roles within an executive team structure (Campbell-Evans, 1990). Although accountability for school operations and student outcomes will ultimately remain with the principal, deputy principals will become involved directly with all elements

of instructional leadership. That is, vision setting, information management and leadership action.

In her exploration of the concept of executive teams in Western Australian schools, Campbell-Evans (1990, p. 19) concludes that while the configuration and operation of teams will vary from one school to the next, the following features will be common to all teams operating effectively in this collaborative mode: a sense of common purpose, negotiated tasks and responsibilities, and the opportunity for team members to develop and utilize their individual skills and areas of expertise.

Picken (1987) continues along these lines by suggesting that deputies will typically have direct leadership roles in the areas of goal setting, curriculum design and evaluation, staff development and resources allocation.

This view of the deputy's role is supported and endorsed by educationalists in other systems. Research conducted in the United States by Anderson and Nicholson (1987) indicates that deputy principals often spend more time on instructional leadership tasks than their principals. Another study by Warner and Stokes (1987 p. 7) supports this finding.

The assistant principal must deal with matters relating to curriculum design and implementation, vocational guidance, and assessment of the unique educational needs of students. In short, the modern assistant principal must first be thought of as a principal, and only secondarily as a deputy to the principal.

This review of the literature on instructional leadership serves two purposes in relation to the evaluation of the DPLDP. Firstly, a strong case has been established to support the relationship between instructional leadership and school effectiveness. Contemporary research studies have clarified the concept and from this has emerged a legitimate instructional leadership role for the deputy principal.

Secondly, the literature review has enabled the researcher to develop an instrument that will be an integral component of the conceptual framework for this evaluation. The typology is a synthesis of contemporary views about what constitutes instructional leadership.

## **Chapter 5**

# **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter contains an account of the research design and methodology of the study. It includes the rationale for using the Stufflebeam CIPP model of program evaluation, an explanation for focussing the study on the area of instructional leadership, a description of the data collection techniques, and an outline of the procedures used to validate the data.

In general terms this research can best be described as a qualitative case study based mainly upon naturalistic methods of data collection. The analysis of that data, however, is structured largely by Stufflebeam's framework of program evaluation and the typology of instructional leadership developed from the literature review.

### **THE STUFFLEBEAM CIPP MODEL OF PROGRAM EVALUATION**

This study utilized the CIPP model of program evaluation developed by Stufflebeam (1971) as a basic methodological framework. CIPP is an acronym comprising the first letters

of the four types of evaluation contained within the model: Context, Input, Process and Product. The researcher has chosen to loosely link the four evaluation strategies even though Stufflebeam claims that each can operate independently.

A context evaluation represents a form of needs assessment. Stufflebeam (1971, p. 312) explains that,

The major objective of context evaluation is to define the environment where change is to occur, the environment's unmet needs, problems underlying these needs, and opportunities for change.

Such evaluations are designed to examine the extent to which a program's objectives and priorities are aligned with the needs of the program's target groups. In the case of the DPLDP evaluation, continuation of the program cannot be justified if it does not have the capacity to meet the professional development needs of the deputy principals.

Input evaluations aim to assess and compare the range of plans or initiatives available for possible implementation. They analyze and rank the advantages and disadvantages of competing programs. This process identifies and assesses the relevant capabilities of the proposing agency, and strategies which may be appropriate for achieving objectives associated with each program goal against the claims of other agencies. According to Stufflebeam (1971, p. 312) the end product of input evaluation is "an analysis of alternative procedural design in terms of potential costs and benefits". In the case of the DPLDP,

continuation of the program cannot be justified if alternative programs exist that could better meet the professional development needs of deputy principals.

Process evaluations assess and guide the implementation of program plans. Such evaluations provide on-going feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of the program and alert decision makers to the need to make adjustments or modifications. In essence, the objective of process evaluation is to detect or predict, during the implementation stages, defects in the procedural design or its implementation. The overall strategy is to identify and monitor, on a continuous basis, the potential sources of failure in a project. In the case of the DPLDP, continuation of the program cannot be justified if it contains structural flaws or if it requires significant restructuring or modifications that would transform it beyond its distinctive characteristics.

Product evaluations assess program outcomes, both positive and negative, intended and unintended. The aim is to determine the effectiveness of a program from a summative perspective. Within the rationale of this evaluation, continuation of the DPLDP cannot be justified if the outcomes are inconsistent with the development of deputy principals' instructional leadership capacities.

Three basic features of the CIPP model make it an appropriate tool for evaluating the DPLDP in the Narrogin Education District.

# 1. CIPP as a comprehensive model for program evaluation

The Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program was implemented for the first time in Western Australia in 1989 in the Narrogin Education District. A broad focus evaluation model was required to ensure a comprehensive overview of the program.

The CIPP model, developed and refined by Stufflebeam, has the potential to generate a thorough analysis of the DPLDP. CIPP is a multi-faceted program evaluation model. It provides the flexibility to view a program from four different perspectives. The model is structured to allow the evaluator to obtain a "comprehensive view of the project while tailoring the evaluation to address the most important information needs of the relevant audiences" (Stufflebeam, 1983, p. 123).

Selection of a more focussed model or strategy to evaluate the DPLDP would have been inappropriate at the time when this evaluation was planned. In 1989 there was a system wide interest in professional development strategies for school administrators. Discussion and debate about alternative strategies was typically conducted by comparing whole programs. Decision makers sought evaluations that would accurately portray programs from many different angles, formative as well as summative, for implementation as well as for accountability, and for numerous audiences.

It was anticipated that a bird's eye perspective gained from an initial comprehensive evaluation would highlight the need to conduct further research in specific areas. Findings and conclusions from the CIPP evaluation would point to areas of research requiring more specialized, specific focus evaluation strategies.

The contextual differences between Canada and Western Australia constituted another reason for adopting a wide focussed evaluation strategy. Geographical, cultural, political and systems differences may have influenced program implementation in unforeseen ways. For example, the role of the deputy principal in North America may differ from the role of the deputy in Western Australia. Approaches to professional development for school administrators may also be significantly different between the two systems. The CIPP model has the potential to expose potential difficulties in transplanting the DPLDP from one continent to another. The process evaluation component of the CIPP model focusses specifically on issues associated with program implementation.

Finally, implementation of the four-pronged CIPP evaluation model was considered achievable. The researcher had the opportunity and resources to conduct a thorough evaluation of the DPLDP by utilizing the Stufflebeam approach. These included clerical and technical support from staff at the Narrogin District Education Office, limited financial backing from the Narrogin District Superintendent, access to library material through the Ministry of Education, and



the full co-operation of the deputy principals in the DPLDP group and their school principals.

2. The CIPP model as a tool for decision makers and therefore appropriate for the purposes of this thesis.

The initial stimulus for this research was the need to inform decision makers within the Narrogin Education District about the appropriateness of the DPLDP as a means of enhancing the instructional leadership capacities of school administrators. The District Superintendent, district office staff and school leaders all countenanced and supported an evaluation of the DPLDP on the basis that the results would be used to determine the future of the program within the district.

The CIPP model of program evaluation is founded primarily on the premise that, "... evaluation is the science of providing information for decision-making" (Stufflebeam, 1971, p. 311). In an historical analysis of program evaluation approaches, Simons (1987, p. 19) states that the Stufflebeam model was,

... directly tied to serving administrators' decisions in a rational sequence of stages, built as it was, upon a rational theory of decision-making.

In this study the CIPP model of program evaluation assisted decision making at two levels. At a formative level it informed decisions about the actual implementation of the DPLDP. Evaluative data guided the program facilitators and district decision makers throughout the life of the

program. Program objectives, strategies, content and processes were modified or fine tuned on the basis of such formative or proactive evaluative information. Ultimately, the long term future of the program (termination, continuation, or modification) will probably be influenced if not determined by an analysis of the data obtained from the CIPP evaluation.

At a summative level, the CIPP model provided the study with the potential to generate data for the purposes of program accountability. Throughout the project, a record was generated of the reasons for decision making at all stages of the DPLDP.

Simons (1987) discusses the inherent dangers of educational researchers utilizing the Stufflebeam model for the purpose of solely informing decision making in specific instances. She makes reference to the relationship between the educational evaluator, as the gatherer of information about an educational program, and the decision maker(s). Within this relationship, asserts Simons, the political processes of decision making and accountability must always remain with those holding the legitimate professional positions. Cronbach et al. (1980, p. 72) support this view:

We are defining a professional role in which evaluators consider themselves responsible to the larger social interest. They should exercise independent judgment as best they can but should not attempt to substitute that judgment for the political process.

These dangers have particular application for the evaluation of the DPLDP in Narrogin. While the ultimate

responsibility for the future of the DPLDP rests with the District Superintendent of Education, a measure of influence can undoubtedly come from the Education Officer for the district. The study ran the risk of embodying a professional conflict of interest because the Education Officer was also the DPLDP facilitator and program evaluator. From the outset, the researcher acknowledges this potential conflict and utilized specific strategies to address this situation (see Chapter 5, Validation of Data). At the same time, the situation producing the inherent danger also created a number of advantages (see Chapter 5, Data Collection).

It should be noted that the researcher resigned from the Ministry of Education in September 1991 to take up an appointment with another state government authority. The processes of data analysis and validation were conducted in the months following his resignation. Any conflict of interest that may have existed for the researcher by virtue of his position as a District Education Officer was eliminated at the time when this research thesis was being prepared.

The researcher is also aware of the criticism of the Stufflebeam model on the grounds that it can promote the maintenance and expansion of managerial power. McDonald (1974, p. 18), for example, considers the CIPP approach to be the prototype of "bureaucratic evaluation". Used solely as a decision making device for managers, this criticism is valid. However, for the purposes of this research study,

the CIPP model will be used only as a methodological structure. The findings and conclusions from this study will go beyond merely informing local administrators.

It should also be noted that the CIPP model is used only to provide a broad framework for data gathering and analysis. No attempt was made to adhere to the finely structured and sequential steps suggested by Stufflebeam. Such detailed specification would be inappropriate for this type of qualitative study.

In the short term, as previously mentioned, this evaluation of the DPLDP will assist with decision making. In the longer term the results of the evaluation will add to the store of research data on professional development for school administrators. More specifically, the study will contribute to the limited research data available on the effectiveness of collegial support groups as a strategy for meeting the professional growth needs of deputy principals.

### 3. CIPP as a flexible evaluation strategy

Stufflebeam has consistently promoted the CIPP model as a flexible evaluation tool. The four evaluation strategies can be used in ways which best serve the needs of the researcher. The researcher may choose to focus on any combination of the four evaluations. Each evaluation may be conducted at varying depth.

According to Stufflebeam (1983, p. 124) a full implementation of the CIPP model would yield information to use in addressing the following questions:

1. What needs were addressed, how pervasive and important were they, and to what extent were the project's objectives reflective of assessed needs ?
2. What procedural and budgeting plan was adopted to address the needs, what alternatives were considered, why was it chosen over them, and to what extent was it reasonable, potentially successful, and cost effective response to the assessed needs ?
3. To what extent was the project plan implemented, and how and for what reasons did it have to be modified ?
4. What results - positive and negative as well as intended and unintended - were observed, how did the various stakeholders judge the worth and merit of the outcomes, and to what extent were the needs of the target population met ?

This study utilized all four types of evaluation. Data for each type was gathered concurrently, but the analysis and discussion of findings were structured in the sequence proposed by Stufflebeam. Using CIPP provided more structure to data collection and analysis than pure naturalistic research advocates. To some extent, then, the naturalistic nature of this research study is compromised by the use of two pre-determined frameworks - the CIPP model and an instructional leadership typology constructed from a review of the literature.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AS THE FOCUS OF THIS EVALUATION**

The roles adopted by deputy principals are diverse, often complex, and vary from one individual to the next.

Likewise, the professional growth opportunities that have been developed to enhance performance of these roles are wide-ranging. The decision to focus this evaluation of the DPLDP on the instructional leadership role was influenced by a number of factors.

The prime factor was the growing importance and significance of instructional leadership in schools. By the end of the 1980s the Western Australian school system was showing signs of being influenced by the findings from the effective schools research. In particular, the relationship between instructional leadership and effective schools invited scrutiny. Further, the release of the Better Schools report and the subsequent re-structuring of the state school system fuelled on-going analysis of the changing role of school administrators. In 1989 the introduction of the DPLDP to the Narrogin education district created an opportunity to conduct local research in an area that was both topical and consistent with developments in the state school system.

Internationally, instructional leadership was also becoming an important focus for research. In 1988 Dr. Patricia Klink (a Director from the Calgary Board of Education) visited Western Australia to launch and promote the I/D/E/A/ Principals' In-service Program. This program had

been developed to enhance the instructional leadership skills of principals. During her visit Dr. Klink emphasized the relationship between instructional leadership and school effectiveness. She also stressed the importance of developing the instructional leadership capacities of school administrators.

Focussing the research on instructional leadership was also related to the on-going debate about the role of school administrators. The research literature of the time promoted the analysis of principals and deputy principals as managers or instructional leaders. The DPLDP evaluation was designed to capitalize on, and enhance this analysis.

The instructional leadership focus also kept the study within manageable and meaningful limits. Without such a focus, an evaluation of the DPLDP may have become too generalized and superficial, particularly if the program had been evaluated in terms of its ability to meet all the professional development needs of deputy principals.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

The data for this evaluation was collected during a twenty two month period from April 1989 to November 1990. It should be acknowledged from the outset that participant observation was an important, though not the major, means of data collection and that the researcher was the facilitator of the DPLDP group under study. Further, at the time of the study the researcher was an officer of the

Western Australian Ministry of Education and had been working in the Narrogin District Education Office since 1987. During the period 1987-91 he was involved in a wide range of programs with school administrators in the district. He developed a strong rapport with principals and deputy principals, gaining their trust and respect. Consequently he was well placed to interact with members of the DPLDP group for the purpose of collecting data for this study.

Early in the 1988 school year, the Narrogin District Education Officer participated in a two-week program to train as a facilitator for the I/D/E/A Principals' In-service Program, a collegial support program developed in Ohio during the 1980s. The training program was conducted by representatives from the Calgary Board of Education. Twelve months later the Education Officer participated in another two-week program to develop the skills required to train other facilitators in the I/D/E/A program. During the period 1988-89 he co-facilitated two principals' collegial support groups in the Narrogin District.

The DPLDP program materials stress the importance of the facilitator becoming a member of the group. The processes used in the program are designed to have the facilitator participate in, and contribute to, all the activities undertaken by other group members. It was for this reason that participant observation was seen to be an appropriate method for data gathering.



Four of the advantages of participant observation, as outlined by Bailey (1978, p. 63), are directly applicable to this research study:

1. In the observation study, the investigator is able to discern on-going behaviour as it occurs and is able to make appropriate notes about its salient features.
2. Because case study observations take place over an extended period of time, the researcher can develop a more intimate and informal relationship with those he is observing.
3. Observation studies are superior to experiments and surveys when data are being collected on non-verbal behaviour.
4. Case study observations are less reactive than other types of data-gathering methods. For example, in laboratory-based experiments and in surveys that depend upon verbal responses to structured questions, bias can be introduced in the very data that the researcher is attempting to study.

Early in the Getting Started component of the DPLDP the group facilitator proposed a thorough and on-going evaluation of the program. It was at this time that the facilitator gained approval from the group to adopt the role of participant observer. It was also accepted that an assistant facilitator would support the facilitator in the process of data recording. During the first two years of the program it is estimated that eighty hours of data collection was conducted through observation of the group.

The process of data gathering soon became routine and unobtrusive. At each monthly session throughout the first year, the facilitators would make notes about group processes, outcomes from activities, group decisions,

comments from individuals, and other significant occurrences. At the conclusion of each daily session the facilitators would compare notes and conduct a thorough review of the day's events. These review sessions were tape recorded. The observation notes and tape transcripts were then combined to create a detailed written record of the program for that day.

The data gathered through participant observation invariably included the non-verbal as well as the verbal behaviour of group members. The facilitators would also review and record the pattern of interaction between group members. As a result, subtle changes in group dynamics were detected and recorded.

Document analysis and informal interactions between the facilitator and members of the DPLDP group were additional strategies employed to gather data for this research.

The major source of data for this study, however, was the semi-structured interview (see Table 5).

The first round of semi-structured interviews was conducted on a one-to-one basis with the DPLDP facilitator/researcher and each of the group members. In the majority of cases interviews were held in schools at times convenient to the deputy principals. One hour was set aside for each interview, and most took at least this time to complete. Prior to the interviews the deputies were supplied with an

outline of the areas to be covered and a list of the questions to be used as discussion starters.

The data collected from these initial interviews were used primarily in the context and input evaluations. In short, the interviews aimed to establish the professional development needs of deputy principals as perceived by members of the group, and their awareness of alternative professional development programs.

**TABLE 5**  
**Data Collection Timeline**

1989	
April	commencement of DPLDP
April - December	document analysis
April - December	participant observations - 40 hours
April - December	informal data gathering - 10 hours
June - November	semi-structured interviews (round 1) - 10 hours
1990	
March	commencement of second year
March - November	participant observations - 40 hours
March - November	informal data gathering - 8 hours
July - November	semi-structured interviews (round 2) - 12 hours
1991	
January - September	preparation of evaluation
November	data validation process

In his capacity as Education Officer for the Narrogin Education District the facilitator had numerous opportunities to contact members of the DPLDP group. These informal interactions often included discussions about the DPLDP program and professional development issues generally. The deputies frequently re-stated, expanded or

supplemented statements made during interview. The perceptions and attitudes expressed during these interactions added a more natural dimension to the data gathering process.

Members of the group were able to discuss a wide range of professional issues frankly and openly with the facilitator. At the time of data collection the facilitator was at the same promotional level as the deputies in the group. His credibility was further enhanced by having recently performed the role of deputy principal in a country district high school.

The second round of semi-structured interviews were held during the latter half of the 1990 school year. Each interview took approximately ninety minutes to conduct. Interview questions were structured to generate data for the context, input, process and product evaluations, with an emphasis on the latter two.

Documented material was used as a source of data for both the context and input evaluations. At the time of the restructuring of the Western Australian state school system there appeared a steady stream of published and unpublished reports and articles from the Ministry of Education, tertiary institutions and other educational bodies. This material contained data that was used to establish the context within which the DPLDP was introduced.

Document analysis was also used to create the conceptual framework for this study. The instructional leadership typology utilized throughout the evaluation was developed from a comprehensive review of the literature (see Chapter 4).

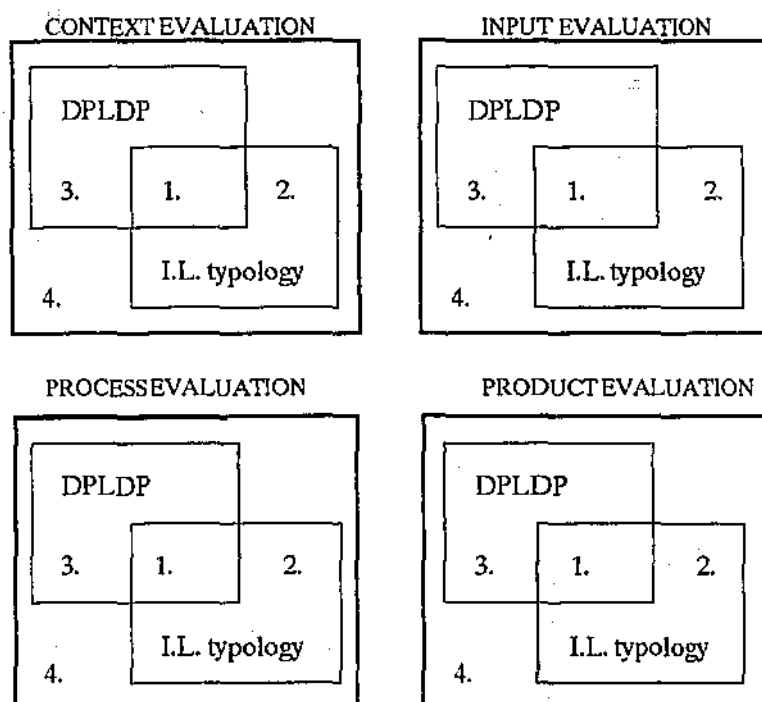
The use of a variety of data gathering techniques was a pre-determined strategy designed to obtain comprehensive and accurate information for the study. It can be noted in the Findings (Chapters 6 - 9) that the majority of data was generated from twenty two hours of semi-structured interviews. Material from this source added objectivity and assisted with validation. During the validation process, group members were validating their own statements and the researcher's analysis of them. Material gathered from eighty hours of participant observation and from eighteen hours of informal interactions with the deputies provided the researcher with the background against which the DPLDP operated. This gave the researcher a greater understanding of the subtle interactions between group members and it also helped him to make sense of interview responses.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The typology of instructional leadership developed from the literature review (see Chapter 4) was used as the framework for conducting the context, input, process and product evaluations of the DPLDP program. In each of the evaluations, data was analysed to determine the

relationship between the DPLDP and the typology. Figure 2 presents the strategy of this analysis.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Strategy for Data Analysis**



1. Elements of DPLDP that match the I.L. typology. (That is, the focus area for the evaluation).
2. Elements of the instructional leadership typology not addressed by the DPLDP
3. Elements of the DPLDP not related to instructional leadership.
4. Data unrelated to instructional leadership and the DPLDP.

By identifying the match between the program and the typology, the mis-matches also emerged. Further, the analysis of data exposed elements of the DPLDP unrelated to instructional leadership. Similarly, aspects of

instructional leadership which fell outside the scope of the DPLDP became evident. The level of congruity, between the typology and the program, that existed in each of the four evaluations, formed the basis upon which evaluative statements were made about the DPLDP.

In utilizing the Stufflebeam model it was necessary for the researcher to collect all data available for each of the four evaluations. At no stage in the data gathering process were attempts made to limit data gathering to statements or behaviours that related only to instructional

**FIGURE 3**  
**Evaluation Focus on Instructional Leadership**

CONTEXT EVALUATION		
INPUT EVALUATION	INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	
PROCESS EVALUATION	CORE	
PRODUCT EVALUATION		



Data collected throughout participant observation, interviews, document analysis, and informal interactions.



Data relating to instructional leadership

leadership. The conceptual framework for this study was designed to allow the researcher to focus on the instructional leadership component of the program after each of the data collection processes had been completed (see Figure 3). Thus the collection of data utilized naturalistic methods more than did the data analysis. By adopting this strategy, an assessment could be made about the significance of instructional leadership in relation to the other roles of deputy principals.

## **VALIDATION OF DATA**

The process of data validation was an integral component of the research design for this evaluation. A thorough and wide-ranging validation process was utilized to check the accuracy of the data and to stimulate further responses and analyses from members of the DPLDP group.

In November 1991 a letter<sup>4</sup> was sent to each member of the group inviting them to participate in a one-day program to examine the findings of the DPLDP evaluation. A draft copy of the evaluation was enclosed. The letter included a clear statement about the purpose of the day and each deputy was encouraged to prepare thoroughly for the validation process. The significance of the validation process was highlighted in the following extract from the letter of invitation:

I am seeking your honest, candid reaction to this draft thesis. My aim is to complete a full

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4. See Appendix 2 for a copy of this letter of invitation.



and accurate evaluation of the program. I need to know which parts of the thesis findings you agree with. I need your criticisms, comments, and new ideas. For this evaluation to be useful for future decision making, it is important that I obtain your thoughts on what is missing, what is incorrect, what is accurate, and what is irrelevant.

Each of the group members was encouraged to examine the draft thesis and annotate their copy in preparation for the validation session. They were informed that the copies of the draft thesis would be collected at the conclusion of the day for further analysis by the researcher. In the letter it was foreshadowed that discussions would be tape recorded to ensure the accuracy of the validation process.

In the week prior to the scheduled validation session the researcher contacted each member of the group by telephone to clarify the procedures for the day and to reinforce the importance of the validation process. Three of the deputy principals took this opportunity to give their general views about the evaluation findings. These were recorded by the researcher.

The validation session was conducted on 20th November, 1991 at the Narrogin District Education office. All members of the DPLDP attended. For approximately six hours the group was engaged in a thorough examination of the research findings. All group members participated actively in the process of confirming, rejecting or amending aspects of the draft thesis.

The six hours of discussions were tape recorded and supplementary notes were taken by the group facilitator. All draft copies of the DPLDP evaluation were collected at the conclusion of the validation session.

At the time of planning for the validation session, the researcher was aware of the time-lag that had been created since the start of the data collection phase of the study. It had taken approximately ten months part-time work to process the immense amount of data gathered from interviews, observations and other sources. The researcher was aware that in the validation process, group members were being asked to cast their minds back twelve months to corroborate, modify or reject the data analysis presented in the draft thesis. And, it was highly likely that the deputies had gained new perspectives on their roles and development needs during this intervening period.

The time-lag situation was discussed with the group prior to the commencement of the validation process in order to reduce the danger of having data gathered in 1989 and 1990 analysed in terms of the views held by the deputies in 1991. This issue was discussed on two other occasions during the course of the validation session.

The researcher gained the approval of all group members to use the validation data in the final research report. The deputies were made aware that the thesis would become a public document, and that this would place added pressure on the researcher to be accountable for the accuracy of all

aspects of the thesis. Members of the DPLDP group were eager for the thesis to be made available to a wide audience. They were keen to have their views about the role of the deputy and related professional development to be distributed as widely as possible.

During the validation session, responses from group members were used for four purposes; to confirm, to clarify, to ensure no misrepresentation, and to ensure the accuracy of material in the thesis. Validation was far more than a process of "rubber-stamping" the findings.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In March 1989 approval to conduct an evaluation of the Deputy Principals Leadership Development Program was sought from the Narrogin District Superintendent of Education, as the representative of the Ministry of Education in the area covering the participating schools. The Superintendent was fully supportive, and in April 1989 she endorsed the research proposal. Further, limited resources from the Narrogin District Education Office were offered to assist with the research.

The proposal to conduct a comprehensive and long-term evaluation of the DPLDP was first presented to the group of Narrogin deputy principals during the Getting Started session in April 1989. The facilitator outlined the purpose and scope of the evaluation and gave a clear

indication of the data gathering processes that would be employed to conduct the research. The group was given a general overview of the participant observation process and the semi-structured interview techniques that were proposed.

Issues associated with confidentiality and anonymity were also discussed at this time. The researcher was given approval by the group to disclose the name of the education district under study. By association, this would limit the anonymity available to members of the group. Individual deputies could be linked to the research by virtue of holding their promotional position during the period 1989-90. The group was prepared to accept this situation.

The researcher gave a clear commitment not to disclose either the names of the deputy principals or the schools in which they worked.

As an additional ethical safeguard, the informed consent of each group member was gained prior to the commencement of each of the interviews.

The data validation process allowed the DPLDP group to scrutinize the research data and thereby ensure the confidentiality commitments were adhered to.

### SECTION 3

### FINDINGS

## Chapter 6

### CONTEXT EVALUATION FINDINGS

Throughout Section 3, the vast majority of quotes are statements from members of the Narrogin DPLDP group. This data reflects the ethnographic, qualitative nature of the research. For consistency, quotation marks are used to distinguish this primary source material. The few quotes from secondary sources are presented without quotation marks.

The purpose of the context evaluation is to determine the extent to which the stated goals, objectives and content of the DPLDP accommodate the professional development needs of deputy principals as instructional leaders.

The findings are presented in two parts: the match between the DPLDP and instructional leadership, and the match between instructional leadership and the deputy principals' perceptions of their roles.

The first stage of the context evaluation will test the extent to which the program is consistent with current concepts of instructional leadership. That is, matching the program against the typology of instructional

leadership developed as part of the literature review. As such this will be a conceptual and documentary analysis.

The second aspect of the context evaluation is designed to determine the extent to which deputy principals in the Narrogin District viewed instructional leadership as an important aspect of their role, and how relevant they viewed a program on instructional leadership as professional development support for them in their schools.

If there is a high degree of importance placed on aspects of instructional leadership by deputy principals and if the DPLDP is judged to be an effective means of developing instructional leadership competencies, then the program can be justified as a means of meeting their current professional development needs.

If, on the other hand, deputy principals indicate little interest in developing their skills as instructional leaders, the program may still be justified as a vehicle for change. That is, it may be justified from a system's perspective, if the system can be shown to value instructional leadership and regard it as a necessary part of the deputies' role.

#### **THE MATCH BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE DPLDP**

The relationship between the DPLDP and the instructional leadership typology will be presented and analysed by focussing on four aspects of the program: the rationale for

the DPLDP, the research and theoretical background to the program, the program goals and objectives, and the program content. Each aspect will be examined using the three established areas of the typology; vision, information and action.

#### THE RATIONALE FOR THE DPLDP

The DPLDP is sub-titled and promoted as "A Collaborative and Collegial Approach to Instructional Leadership". The rationale for the DPLDP, as presented in the introduction to the program handbook, is based upon the assumptions that deputy principals have a legitimate instructional leadership role in schools, that particular knowledge and skills are required for effective instructional leadership, and that school effectiveness is influenced by the exercise of such leadership by deputy principals. The developers of the program acknowledge that,

there is growing demand for deputy principals, as members of administrative teams, to be equally knowledgeable of the theory and practice of instructional leadership in order to collaborate in ensuring individual student growth through effective education.

The program rationale includes a number of references from the effective schools literature to support the relationship between effective schools and strong instructional leadership. For example,

One of the most tangible and indispensable characteristics of effective schools is strong administrative leadership, without which disparate elements of good schooling can neither be brought together or kept. Hence, deputy principals need to be appropriately



equipped to fulfil their roles within administrative teams and ultimately contribute to school effectiveness.

At a macro, philosophical level of program evaluation it can be said that the rationale of the DPLDP is consistent with the aim of developing deputy principals as instructional leaders. The designers of the program explicitly acknowledge the importance of instructional leadership as a component of the role of the deputy principal, and they claim that their program will enhance the competencies of deputies in this area.

#### RESEARCH AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND TO THE PROGRAM

The content of the DPLDP has been selected and developed in response to findings from research conducted as part of the effective schools movement (Duke 1984, McCurdy 1983) and from research into effective staff development and in-service programs (Cawalti 1982).

The introduction to the DPLDP handbook contains an explanation for the selection of the content of the program. Specific references are made to aspects of instructional leadership and the attempts made by the designers of the program to select themes and activities consistent with the aim of developing the instructional leadership skills of deputy principals.

The information about program content contained in the handbook introduction indicates that the DPLDP reflects current theory about instructional leadership in the three

key areas of school vision, information and leadership action.

The DPLDP program material singles out the importance of developing commitment to a shared vision of the school for special attention. It acknowledges that effective instructional leadership is dependent upon "obtaining consensus and commitment regarding the school's direction".

It makes no direct reference, however, to the nature of the shared vision; it does not acknowledge the importance of focussing the vision on the instructional development of students.

Similarly, although the importance of evaluating curriculum and effective student assessment are recognised in the introductory overview of program content, there is no indication that the program will introduce participants to the area of Management Information Systems - an area deemed important for successful instructional leadership. No explicit statement is made to indicate that aspects of the program will focus on the complexities of data gathering and analysis for decision making in schools.

The program designers emphasize the importance for deputy principals of increasing knowledge and developing skills in the teaching-learning process as the basis of leadership action. This emphasis provides the strongest link between the content of the program and the capacity of the program to develop deputy principals as instructional leaders. Two

references from the program overview are particularly supportive of this link - the first from McCurdy (1983) and the second from the Calgary Board of Education (1983).

To exert instructional leadership, school administrators need to know how to organise and sustain an effective instructional program, and the nature of the learning process and curriculum practices.

The Calgary Board of Education has a number of specific expectations of school administrators and one of these is to have a strong research-based view of teaching and learning and a clearly thought-out sense of what schools can and should do.

#### PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The stated goal of the DPLDP is "to help deputy principals improve their professional competencies so that they can, in turn, contribute to improved school programs for students". The objectives of the program are fivefold: (1) collegial support, (2) personal professional development, (3) continuous improvement, (4) reflections on learning and (5) staff development.

By emphasizing student programs, as opposed to student outcomes, the DPLDP goal conflicts with the instructional leadership characteristic of being goal oriented rather than input oriented. If the specific content of the DPLDP supports this emphasis on means versus ends, deputy principals and other stakeholders may rightfully question the direction taken by this program at a time when the state school system is encouraging schools to focus on student outcomes. The school development process outlined

in the Ministry of Education's School Development Plans: Policy and Guidelines statement released in 1989 emphasizes the importance for schools to focus on students' "cognitive, social and personal development outcomes". In 1991 the Curriculum Directorate of the Ministry of Education commenced a program to produce set of student outcome statements to be used by schools for school development planning.

Two of the program's objectives relate directly to the development of instructional leadership competencies - reflections on learning and staff development. Objective 4, "to have deputy principals examine what is known about the way children learn then examine instructional practices to determine the ways in which those practices reflect what is known", is consistent with the theory of effective instructional leadership. From an instructional leadership perspective, the deputy principal needs to be aware of current educational theory and practice prior to intervention in the teaching - learning process.

Objective 5, "deputy principals examine the principles of adult learning, a research-based model of in-service, effective staff development strategies, and a professional development planning model", also supports the instructional leadership model. Basically, it advocates direct involvement by the deputy principal in teacher improvement and development.

The first three objectives (collegial support, personal professional development and continuous improvement) may or may not be supportive of instructional leadership development. In each case it depends upon the approach taken by participants in the program. Because the program allows participants to deal with specific aspects of their working lives, it is difficult to pre-determine the amount of time each session and participant will actually spend on issues related to instructional leadership. The content-free characteristic of these three objectives could lead program facilitators and participants to either highlight or de-emphasize instructional leadership in allocating time spent exploring the concept. In short, three of the five objectives of the program could be met without any reference to the role of deputy principal as instructional leader.

At the context evaluation stage of this research it is not possible to determine the links between these three objectives (collegial support, personal professional development and continuous improvement) and development of instructional leadership capacities, in isolation from what happens in practice. This can only be done by analyzing the way the program actually operated along with the outcomes. Thus the process and product evaluation phases of this study will take up this issue.

#### **PROGRAM CONTENT**

The content of the DPLDP consists of various theories, skill building activities and practical strategies for

school administrators. Approximately fifty percent of the content, as outlined in the program handbook<sup>5</sup> can be said to be aimed directly at developing the instructional leadership capacities of participants.

During session two, participants consider aspects of their personal leadership style and the effects of utilizing different leadership styles in the school situation. Deputy principals are encouraged to examine their own leadership behaviours and to become aware of the impact their leadership style is having on others. There is no evidence, however, to suggest that the focus of this examination is on instructional leadership any more than other aspects of leadership (for example, social, political or administrative leadership).

Four of the eight sessions that comprise the first year of the program assign time for participants to examine aspects of learning theory. By reference to various theories and models, deputy principals reflect on instructional practices in their schools and assess the appropriateness of these practices against sound learning theory.

Session four is set aside to explore the role of the deputy principal as a change agent. The concept of school vision is advanced as the starting point from which school administrators can bring about significant change in schools. Session four is entitled "The role of the deputy

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5. See Appendix 3

principal in charge - creating, articulating and selling the school vision". It should be noted again that no direct reference is made to the importance for instructional leadership of developing a curriculum focus for the school vision.

Sessions two, three and seven contain activities that focus on the principles and practices of effective staff development. The activities are directed at improving teacher performance in the teaching-learning process. That is, staff development is seen as a strategy for achieving a specific purpose - improving student performance.

Apart from these content items that relate directly to instructional leadership there are other aspects of the DPLDP that could be viewed as generic management skills which may improve the instructional leadership effectiveness of school administrators. These include conflict resolution, communication, consensus reaching and time management. Program time is allocated to explore these management skills, but the links with instructional leadership are not emphasized. Participants may be encouraged to hone their skills without pausing to examine the relationship between these management techniques and the primary role of providing instructional leadership in school.

The one significant aspect of instructional leadership not addressed in the content outline is information management. Nowhere in the program documentation is mention made of

student assessment strategies, management information systems or reporting techniques. This omission could seriously reduce the capacity of the program to develop deputy principals as instructional leaders.

Table 6 summarizes the instructional leadership content of the Deputy Principals' leadership Development Program by highlighting the specific theories, skill building activities and practical strategies contained in each of the program sessions.

**TABLE 6**  
**Material Related to Instructional Leadership in the Content of DPLDP**  
**(Year One)**

SESSION	THEORIES	SKILLS	PRACTICAL STRATEGIES
Getting Started	Leadership theories	_____	Brainstorming In-basket
1.	Theories of learning	Time management	_____
2.	Leadership styles	Management of staff development	Implementation of different leadership styles
3.	Staff development theory	_____	_____
4.	Change Management	_____	Change agent strategies
5.	_____	Communication skills	_____
6.	Theories of learning	C-BAM change management model	_____
7.	Theories of learning	_____	Staff development strategies
8.	_____	_____	_____



The statements of rationale, theoretical background, goals and objectives, contained in the introduction to the program handbook allow for the following evaluative statements to be made about the capacity of the DPLDP to enhance the instructional leadership capacities of deputy principals in Narrogin schools:

1. Two of the program's objectives relate directly to instructional leadership. If each objective is given the same amount of attention, in terms of time allocation and program content, those responsible for the provision of professional development in the Narrogin District will be guaranteed that 40% of the DPLDP will meet their requirements in regard to instructional leadership.
2. The remaining 60% of the program may contain elements of instructional leadership, but this cannot be guaranteed. The point here is that certain aspects of the program are participant specific rather than program specific. The extent of the focus on instructional leadership will be determined on a case by case or group by group basis.
3. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the DPLDP is primarily a program designed to enhance instructional leadership, and that participants will be presented with content and processes consistent with current theory and practice in this area.

## THE MATCH BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

The perceptions of the DPLDP group members about their roles as instructional leaders is an essential component of the context for this evaluation. It is necessary to determine the extent to which the deputy principals view themselves as instructional leaders and the importance they place on participating in a program designed to increase their competencies in this area. The perceptions of the group members will be presented in terms of their overall professional development needs and in terms of their needs exclusive to instructional leadership.

### DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR OVERALL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

In the broadest terms, the professional development needs of deputy principals, as expressed by the participants in the Narrogin DPLDP group, can be divided into two categories.

The first set of needs can be grouped under the heading of instructional leadership, and analyzed in terms of the vision/information/action typology. The second set of needs can best be described as generic management or administrative skills; that is, those skills and abilities needed to carry out the day to day requirements traditionally associated with the role of the deputy principal.

Only three of the deputy principals focussed primarily on their role as instructional leaders in their schools. The most important needs for these deputy principals were the skills and abilities associated with achieving a shared vision of what their school should be. Administrative skills were either rated as less important or (in the case of one) not identified at all.

In contrast, six of the nine participants in the program readily nominated the management/administrative skills. These were usually the first needs identified and discussed by the deputy principals. Professional development in instructional leadership areas tended to be viewed as secondary in importance; that is, as a need to be addressed after they had dealt with their more pressing administrative needs.

This finding was endorsed by the deputies during the validation session conducted in 1991. Reflecting on their professional needs in 1989, the group concluded that situational factors were responsible for this emphasis on administrative competencies. The majority of group members were in the first year of their promotional positions and also in their first year at their current school. They saw themselves as role takers rather than role makers. The roles they were given were primarily administrative and technical in nature.

Two group members could recall receiving written duty statements (from their principals) that reflected little,

if any, instructional leadership responsibilities. The well established views of teachers about the traditional role of the deputy principal were also cited as a barrier to these deputies taking on an expanded leadership role.

For another group member, the task of changing staff attitudes about the role of deputy principal was accepted as a personal challenge during the period 1989-90. He purposefully set out to convince his school colleagues that his claim to instructional leadership was legitimate, and in the best interests of the school.

However, there was general recognition within the group that the role of deputy principal was becoming much broader. The role was expanding, albeit slowly, to include a genuine instructional leadership function.<sup>6</sup> The deputies expressed this view in different ways.

"The job involves a lot more these days. The pace of change is increasing. The old style deputy principal with job tasks like stock management and carnivals is changing. Policy making and school development are two big ones - this wasn't the case when I first became deputy principal."

"A deputy principal needs a working knowledge of school development. Mission statements, school decision making, performance indicators, etc. As a school administrator you need to be able to demonstrate that you have a firm understanding of these concepts."

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6. During the validation session group members agreed that the role change was not confined to the Narrogin group. Interaction with deputy principals from other districts confirmed the systemic nature of this change.

"School development processes - a deputy principal is strategically placed to be able to support or hold back Ministry of Education initiatives in this area."

"School development planning and working with groups of staff in this area. Many of our teachers are very cynical about this whole area and the whole of Better Schools. I need strategies to get them on side."

A number of group members were confident that their need to develop administrative skills would diminish as a professional development need in a relatively short period of time. The higher order capabilities associated with instructional leadership would then assume greater significance.

#### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ASSOCIATED WITH INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Throughout the period 1989-91 the concept of instructional leadership was discussed by members of the DPLDP in a variety of contexts; during interviews, in one-to-one discussions with the group facilitator and during DPLDP sessions. This section contains the perceptions of the group members about their needs for professional development in this area. The three part typology of instructional leadership (vision, information and action) developed from the literature review is used as a framework for examining the views of the deputy principals.

## VISION

During the first round of semi-structured interviews, over half of the members of the DPLDP group nominated the ability to develop and support a school purpose or vision as a professional development need. This was expressed in different ways. One deputy described this as,

"Finding better ways of gaining a whole school commitment to what the school is trying to achieve. Building cohesion. This is difficult when the staff changes so frequently in country towns."

For another it was,

"Getting staff to work together as a team. This is critical. We all need to be pushing in the same direction. Students can sense whether staff are united in purpose. So, I need people skills in this area."

Yet another was more direct:

"I need to find out more about setting a school mission statement then implementing it."

Two deputy principals made direct reference to the need to develop a curriculum focus for their school vision. For example, when asked to become more specific about the skills required to promote vision for their school, they responded:

"... techniques that will allow me to gain the respect and commitment of teachers to sound educational practice. Effective staff management processes to get teachers to work together for the benefit of students, for example, strategies for staff development days."

"Ideas for getting staff to concentrate on educational issues rather than inter-personal problems. Ideas for gaining staff cohesion - a focus on what students should be achieving."

This focus on educational practice and student outcomes appears to indicate that the concept of school vision is accepted as realistic and meaningful by these two deputy principals. Further, this acceptance is based on a personally thought through educational rationale. Without such specification, nomination of school vision development as a professional development need could be seen simply as a reaction to recent Ministry of Education policy initiatives in this area; an organisational compliance rather than being based on personal, professional educational commitment.

In 1991 group members were clear in their minds that the concept of school vision setting (as it emerged in 1989) was accepted readily by deputy principals, but was driven by forces external to schools. The deputies recognized the value in vision setting as a strategic leadership tool.<sup>7</sup>

Three of the five deputy principals who recognized school vision development as a priority need went on to emphasize the importance of articulating and "selling" the vision to

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7. Comments made during the validation session (1991) indicated a perception that a strained relationship existed between schools and the central office of the Ministry of Education during the period 1989-90. Given such an environment it was unlikely that external pressure to establish vision statements would have been received favourably unless school based personnel could see merit in the initiative.

the whole school community. According to these deputy principals,

"Techniques to build relationships with parents and other members of the xxxxx community are necessary if you want to get your message across about school initiatives and school operations - essential if you want your vision to materialize."

"I need to find out more about setting a school mission statement .... we need practical follow up. That is a difficult concept to sell to staff."

"Managing staff involvement in making decisions and communication within the staff are big areas of need."

#### MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

All the deputy principals considered the design and implementation of an effective system for managing information about teacher performance and student achievement to be a complex and demanding aspect of instructional leadership. All were willing to accept that a management information system (of one type or another) was necessary to ensure that appropriate decisions are made about the design and implementation of curriculum programs for students. However, there was a range of views about the role of the deputy principal in such a system, and there was a corresponding diversity in the level of importance placed on skills development in this area as a professional development priority.



Five members of the group indicated a need to develop skills in the area of student assessment. One stated that "a management information system is only as useful as the information fed into it about student performance", and that school administrators had to ensure that the primary purpose of any management information system is to process relevant and accurate information.

There was a general expression of inadequacy and vulnerability in this area. The recent change in focus in schools from educational inputs (teacher programs, daily work pads, teaching strategies and resources) to student outcomes has meant that deputy principals are being called upon to demonstrate knowledge and skills in the assessment of students. Three comments typified their views:

"Student monitoring, evaluation and reporting to parents. These are critical areas. I could learn a lot more here."

"Assessment techniques and management information systems within a District High School are important areas for me to develop... organizing information across the school so that decisions can be made. The whole area of monitoring standards."

"I know that a lot of developments have been taking place in this area. Sooner or later I know I will have to focus on these new techniques of assessment and recording. A couple of young teachers in my current school are keen to make some changes in this area."

Despite the acceptance by most of the deputy principals that information systems in schools would grow in importance there were still suspicions about the value of such systems relative to the time and effort required to

design and operate them.<sup>8</sup> One deputy principal stated that one of his main professional development needs is to,

"Find ways of setting up performance indicators and information gathering techniques in a way that doesn't take up all my administrators relief time."

Two other members of the DPLDP group were concerned about their ability to convince others about the value of investing time in this area. One commented that,

"Management Information Systems is an area that I'll have to develop. Getting teachers to accept that meaningful gathering of information can give you the raw material for setting policy and direction for the school is a big task. As deputy principal I should be equipped to sell this notion to staff and show them how to do it!."

Only one deputy principal specifically mentioned effective methods for reporting to students and parents as an immediate professional development need. This deputy principal has been involved in developing new reporting procedures at his current school and he is keen to increase his knowledge and skills in this field.

Effective and efficient techniques for reporting student achievements is an important component of instructional leadership. The Ministry of Education is encouraging

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8. The atmosphere of suspicion about the worth of complex information system was still prevalent at the time of the validation session in 1991. The group reinforced the view that in 1989 there was a good deal of cynicism amongst teachers and school administrators about this aspect of the school development planning process. It should also be noted that the DPLDP was praised by group members as a useful mechanism for group members to explore the issues associated with management information systems.

schools to focus on student outcomes as the basis for making decisions and planning school programs. Student outcomes are to be the main focus for schools when they report to students, their parents and the central office of the Ministry. Most of the participants in the DPLDP group must either feel comfortable with their school's current practices in reporting (and therefore do not share the view expressed by the central office of the Ministry of Education) or consider other professional development needs to be more pressing<sup>9</sup>.

Six of the deputy principals, in one way or another, expressed a need to develop skills in monitoring and appraising staff (both teaching and non-teaching). Four of these deputies openly admitted that they felt very uncomfortable when taking on responsibilities for staff appraisal in their schools. They all acknowledged the importance of monitoring teacher performance and they want the skills to be able to make these processes profitable and meaningful for both themselves and the staff members they are working with. When asked to provide more detail about their specific needs in monitoring staff, two deputy principals responded:

"Techniques for interacting with teachers and non-teaching staff about their professional work. Supervision of staff and formal appraisal procedures. In country areas you tend to get large numbers of

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9. The validation session clarified this situation. It was the general view that reporting student performance was a low priority area for development in 1989. But this has changed dramatically in recent times. All agreed that reporting and recording had become a focus area for development in many schools during 1991.

graduate teachers and teachers in their second or third years. This puts an added workload on deputy principals. We need to become efficient as well as effective in staff monitoring."

"Staff monitoring and appraisal are complex areas. I need to find ways to be honest and constructive with staff when dealing with problem areas."

Another deputy principal likened himself to a teachers' college tutor in the first year of a graduate teacher's career. The large number of beginning teachers sent to his school meant that a significant part of his working life is spent,

"...assisting beginning teachers - induction, appraisal, supporting them with programming, assessment, etc. I am being asked to do more and more in this role. Professional development is essential."

The importance of effective information management was restated by group members in 1991. However, it was stressed that efficiency in the information management process was of critical importance to instructional leaders. A number of deputies had some knowledge of sophisticated, all-encompassing systems for management of information. They were less than impressed with these complex systems that appeared to draw heavily on teacher and administrator time.

## ACTION

For a school administrator to claim to be an effective instructional leader it would be necessary to demonstrate direct, active involvement in the teaching-learning process of the school. The development of effective systems for

gathering and analyzing data about teacher effectiveness and student performance stands for very little if the administrator accessing such information is reluctant to intervene whenever action is required to re-focus, correct or develop aspects of the school's education program.

Deputy principals involved in the Narrogin DPLDP group discussed a wide array of professional development requirements that relate directly to this "action" component of instructional leadership. These can be grouped into three broad categories - knowledge and skills in curriculum as the basis for intervention in the teaching-learning process, staff development, and priority setting and resource allocation.

Seven deputy principals nominated knowledge and skills in curriculum as a primary (and on-going) professional development requirement. Credibility was a concern for most of them. They appeared reluctant to take corrective action with teachers when they were not fully confident about the area of curriculum in question. This emerged in different ways:

"Updates and refreshers in curriculum areas across the primary curriculum field is a priority for me. If I'm not up to date I cannot lead the staff anywhere. A manager needs a strong educational base to lead staff - to be credible. My situation is rather unique. I have responsibility for the primary area of the school. I need to be fully up to date to be able to demonstrate credibility, understanding and leadership to other staff."

"Now more than ever I feel curriculum knowledge and keeping up with curriculum changes to be critical job responsibilities for the deputy

principal. If I am not confident about curriculum, how can I gain credibility as a leader amongst staff? The principal is increasingly ready to share responsibility for curriculum management with the two deputy principals. This takes time. I need professional development in this area."

"I need updates on educational theories and current practices. Many decisions you make at school require a knowledge of current educational thinking."

For another deputy, credibility was a matter of being at least one step ahead of the classroom teachers in the school.

Generally, the deputy principals felt professionally isolated in their country schools. They regarded interaction with colleagues and being presented with current theories and curriculum models as effective means of overcoming this isolation.

These findings were the subject of lengthy debate during the validation session. The group expressed the view that in 1989 the need to become expert in curriculum content was less important to them than was the need to increase their expertise in principles of learning. They also suggested that primary-secondary split within the membership of the group would explain this variation in emphasis between curriculum content and curriculum delivery. Regardless of the emphasis, development in the areas of curriculum and instruction are still important pre-requisite skills for effective instructional leadership.

If the main purpose for building up knowledge and skills in curriculum is to be able to become directly involved in the educative processes in the school, then deputy principals also need a range of communicative and interaction skills to allow them to act decisively and demonstrate leadership with their teachers. As one deputy stated,

"I'm always seeking new staff management strategies. You never stop growing in this area. I'm always looking for new ways to motivate, direct and supervise staff."

The link between curriculum awareness and the skills to intervene in the teaching-learning process was expressed by another member of the group in these terms:

"I'm spending more and more of my time counselling and advising young teachers. I need more knowledge and strategies to be advise well. This also means that I need to become more familiar with curriculum changes and classroom management strategies. Also, student discipline techniques and child psychology."

A wide range of these skills or strategies were identified by members of the group. These included: communication skills, appraisal techniques, providing constructive criticism, providing honest feedback, motivation techniques, coaching and conflict resolution.

Devolution of decision making to the school level has involved local responsibility for the professional development of staff. In recent years schools have been allocated resources for this purpose and encouraged to link staff development with the school development planning process. This shift in responsibility from the centre to

schools is undoubtedly the reason why most of the deputy principals in the study nominated knowledge and skills in teacher development as an important area for their own professional development. They endorsed this finding in 1991.

Four of the deputies discussed the relationship between teacher appraisal and teacher development. They realised that effective leadership involved more than the identification of inadequacies in teacher performance; avenues for teachers to improve in areas of weakness must be made available by the administration team. One comment captures this relationship:

"Credibility in the position of deputy principal depends upon performance. You cannot continue to point out areas of weakness in teacher performance without offering credible alternative strategies. The days of 'do as I say and not as I do' have gone. Teachers look to the deputy for ideas."

The focus in the area of staff development varied amongst the deputy principals. One was keen to develop a school-wide management system for the professional development of all staff. Another wanted to explore current theories of staff development. Two others were interested to develop strategies for designing and presenting their own development programs at school.

The importance of developing skills in resource management and linking resource allocation to school priorities was discussed by only one of the deputy principals. Five



others identified financial management or budgeting skills as areas for professional development but they gave no indication that they were pursuing resource management as a means of enhancing their instructional leadership role. Financial management was virtually seen as a management function quite separate from the priorities and programs of the school.

Three of these five deputies believed that handling school finances was the responsibility of the principal and that they needed to develop skills in this area to enhance their prospects of becoming a principal.

The validation session allowed the group members to reflect on the importance they had placed (in 1989) on resource management as an instructional leadership tool. No member of the group could claim to have had an active role in this area at the time when the DPLDP commenced. Approximately half the group were subsequently drawn into this area of school operations.

The deputy principals agreed that the increase in school decision making in resource allocation during the period 1989 to 1990 was the cause of this re-assessment of their in school financial management. They also suggested that participation in the DPLDP had raised their awareness of the importance of resource management for school effectiveness.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ASSOCIATED WITH GENERIC MANAGEMENT SKILLS

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, six of the nine participants tended to focus on generic management/administrative skills when asked to nominate professional development requirements for them as deputy principals. These six had the perception that the role of the deputy principal is primarily administrative and that their educational leadership function can only be addressed after the day to day technical, management tasks have been performed. It was clear that for these deputies the period 1989-90 was one in which they would concentrate on developing their administrative and management competencies. In this way they would build their credibility amongst teachers and other school administrators.

There also appeared to be little consideration given to the relationship between administrative tasks and the purpose of the school. These deputy principals were satisfied with carrying out administrative functions without necessarily considering the connection between these tasks and the student outcomes the school was attempting to achieve.

Between them, the deputy principals identified a long list of generic management/administrative skills. In short, these can be categorized under three headings - time and stress management, personal career development and knowledge of the education system.

Five deputies were convinced that by developing time and stress management techniques they would perform the role of deputy principal more effectively. Three of these deputies had been involved in time and/or stress management programs but they still nominated this area as an important professional development need. A comment from one of the deputies is fairly typical:

"I need to learn effective day to day management techniques. Doing things smarter and saving time will make me become more effective in my role as deputy - and reduce my stress at work."

Techniques for enhancing career opportunities constituted another important area for professional growth identified by three members of the group. There appeared to be a reluctance on the part of deputy principals to rate personal career development as an important professional need. However, it soon became apparent that career counselling, curriculum vitae preparation and job interview skills were topics that the majority of group members were keen to investigate. One deputy principal offered this candid comment:

"If I was totally honest I'd have to say that advice on personal career development is very important. You need to become aware of opportunities, both within and outside the Ministry of Education, both within and outside education. Organizing your curriculum vitae and interview techniques are important skills."

It is also worth noting that four of the deputy principals saw the whole area of professional development as an important means of enhancing their prospects for promotion. In the minds of some deputies, the ability to cite

involvement in a wide range of professional development experiences is viewed favourably by their superiors within the education system. This has obvious implications for any analysis of their professional development needs. The decision to participate in a particular in-service course or professional program may be motivated by a desire to enhance either management skills or educational leadership capabilities. On the other hand, some deputies may be motivated by a desire to add to their list of professional development experiences as a means of increasing their chances for promotion.

The final set of skills and abilities that were identified as important for deputies to develop cover a wide range of specific topics. Examples from three group members indicate the diversity of topics.

"I feel vulnerable about my lack of understanding about Ministry regulations, policies, the Education Act, etc."

"I find the union and industrial area perplexing. I don't feel confident about discussing these issues."

"One area that is becoming increasingly important is legal issues in education. I am frequently asked questions by teachers about their rights and responsibilities."

Generally, the deputy principals believed that no mechanism currently exists for informing them about the operations of the education system outside of schools. Two deputies indicated that they were resigned to the fact that each deputy has to take personal responsibility for increasing

their knowledge and understanding of the system either by building a network of contacts or by "doing a lot of reading".

The findings presented here were accepted unchallenged by the members of the DPLDP during the validation session. Group members were keen to point out that their professional development needs outlined in this section were a reflection of the education system at the time, and of their position within the system.

#### CONTEXT EVALUATION - CONCLUSIONS

The findings from the context evaluation indicate that the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program, as presented in the program's stated goals, objectives and rationale, has the potential to meet the professional development needs of deputy principals as instructional leaders. Strong and direct links can be drawn between the content of the program and the elements of instructional leadership considered important by contemporary researchers in this area.

The only significant area of instructional leadership not addressed in the DPLDP is the management of information about student and teacher performance. There appears to be little scope for participants to explore the structure and operation of management information systems - an essential component of instructional leadership. Strategies for information management would only form part of the agenda

for program meetings if individual group members chose to focus on this area in their personal professional development plans, or if it became a priority area for the group during the second year of the program.

Given that the DPLDP has the capacity to develop deputy principals as instructional leaders, the program can be seen as an effective means of meeting the professional development needs of deputy principals. However, the findings from the context evaluation also indicate that a significant number of deputies in the group currently have development needs that fall outside the spectrum of the instructional leadership area - needs which they assign priority.

These findings have important implications for decision makers in the Narrogin District. The apparent mis-match between the development needs prioritised by the majority of deputy principals and the primary focus of the DPLDP, might seem to weaken the justification of the program. However, continuing with the DPLDP could be argued for on the grounds that it serves as a means of changing the attitudes and practices of deputy principals in schools in the Narrogin district. In this way the District Superintendent could be seen to be supporting the direction outlined in the Better Schools Report - that is, an enhanced instructional leadership role for all school administrators.

If the decision makers within the Narrogin District determine that, despite the perceptions of some deputy principals about their professional development needs (in 1989-90), it is appropriate to pursue instructional leadership as a primary focus, then the continuation of the program can be justified. Further, it is worth noting that members of the DPLDP group concede that a range of situational factors focussed their professional development requirements in administrative or management areas at the time they commenced the program. Recent developments within the education system and within their own careers have changed these development needs significantly.

The DPLDP group opposed the assertion that the program may only be justified on the grounds that the district superintendent would be seen to be supporting the philosophical direction of the Ministry of Education. The group stated forcefully that continuation of the DPLDP was justified for a range of more immediate and "more legitimate" reasons.

Within the parameters of the context evaluation there is justification for continuation of the DPLDP within the Narrogin District.

## Chapter 7

# INPUT EVALUATION FINDINGS

The purpose of the input evaluation is to determine the extent to which there are sound grounds for choosing the DPLDP in preference to other types of programs that could meet the instructional leadership needs of deputy principals.

The findings from the context evaluation support the continuation of the program. However, justification may still be unwarranted if alternative programs exist that could be used to more effectively meet the needs of deputy principals, the Narrogin Education District and the education system.

The findings from the input evaluation are presented in two parts. Firstly, the knowledge of alternative programs held by the deputy principals and their assessments of such programs will be presented. These findings will allow for one type of comparison to be drawn between the DPLDP and other programs.

The second set of findings will stem from a comparison of the DPLDP with a range of other professional development



programs and courses. Ideally, this comparison would focus on the capacity of these alternative programs to develop deputies as instructional leaders. Such precision was not possible within the parameters of this study. The instructional leadership components of other programs will vary over time and from course to course. Any precise analysis of the capacity of these alternative programs to meet the needs of deputies would constitute another research study in its own right.

It is possible, however, to compare and contrast the DPLDP with other programs in a more general sense and in this way make predictions about the likelihood of the DPLDP to be more or less suitable than other programs. For example, while it would be inappropriate to compare and contrast the DPLDP with any one course of study offered at a tertiary institution, it is possible to make a comparison between the DPLDP and tertiary award courses in general.

#### DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' KNOWLEDGE OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Each of the participants in the Narrogin DPLDP group was able to list and discuss numerous sources of professional development that related to their current work roles. For the purposes of analysis these can be categorized under six headings:<sup>10</sup>

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10. In 1991 the DPLDP group suggested that a seventh category be added. That is, formal and informal networking. Apart from this modification, the group validated this finding.

1. Award courses through tertiary institutions.
2. Training programs sponsored by tertiary institutions.
3. Management training provided by private organisations.
4. Professional development programs linked to professional associations.
5. Professional development opportunities provided by the central office of the Ministry of Education.
6. Professional development opportunities provided by district offices of the Ministry of Education.

It should be noted that while most of the deputies were aware of the programs in each of these categories, it was often the case that they had not gained this awareness through direct experience - that is, by having been a participant in them. The knowledge of these alternative sources of professional development was obtained in a variety of ways. Discussion with colleagues and reading promotional material were two of the most significant sources of information.

#### **AWARD COURSES AT TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS**

Despite the fact that only one member of the group was enrolled at a tertiary institution during 1989-90, all deputies were aware of a wide range of courses available at post graduate level in areas such as education, administration, management and computer education. Most

had investigated the content and structure of various post graduate diploma courses in education and/or educational administration.

Amongst the participants in the DPLDP there was a measure of consistency in attitude towards tertiary study. In short, deputies had some serious doubts about the potential of tertiary programs to meet their immediate professional development needs, whilst acknowledging that successful completion of such programs would enhance their promotional opportunities within the school system.

At the validation session, one member of the group disputed the accuracy of this finding. He maintained that in 1989 (and in the intervening period) he held the view that certain tertiary award courses do offer professional development experiences that match his professional needs. This include instructional leadership skills development.

Six members of the group expressed doubts about the relevance of tertiary courses for deputy principals in their day to day operations. Four of these deputies considered education or administration courses to be "too theoretical" and "lacking in practical strategies". Upon further investigation it became clear that these perceptions had formed as a result of speaking with colleagues previously or currently undertaking post graduate study, or from personal recollections of the theoretical aspects of undergraduate study.

The general lack of enthusiasm about participating in post graduate study at tertiary institutions also stems from perceptions about studying as an external student. Three group members indicated that living in a country district had been an important factor in their decision not to enrol in a tertiary program.

Attitudes towards formal tertiary study are reflected in the following statements.

"I've thought about entering a tertiary program but I've been put off by the external studies aspect. I'm not fully committed to tertiary study. I'm not sure that it makes you any better in the school situation."

"I've bitten the bullet and made preliminary arrangements to commence a post graduate diploma in 1992. You have to do it (further study) sooner or later. I've put it off too long already!"

"University programs provide you with a theoretical overview of educational issues. This, in itself, is useful. However, I've got some doubts about being able to transfer these theories into practical strategies for use at school. I suspect that a lot of the material would not be directly relevant to my position as deputy."

The one member of the group currently enrolled at a tertiary institution (1989-90) was not satisfied that his Post Graduate Diploma in Computer Studies was meeting his current professional development needs. He cited the costs involved in undertaking this program (Higher Education Contribution Scheme, text books, computer costs, travel

expenses) as negative aspects. He was also dissatisfied with various aspects of studying as an external student.<sup>11</sup>

None of the group members saw a relationship between award courses run by tertiary institutions and the enhancement of instructional leadership capacities. On the contrary, there appeared to be a well-developed cynicism about the capacity of the tertiary institutions to make a worthwhile contribution in this area. Group members were critical of the content of tertiary courses. They were seen to be inconsistent with the everyday needs of school based personnel.

#### TRAINING PROGRAMS SPONSORED BY TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

All members of the group were aware of training and development programs (Short Courses) that were either run or sponsored by universities or TAFE colleges. Five claimed direct experience in these programs: courses in decision making, reading education, conflict resolution, time management and strategic planning were mentioned specifically.

Very few favourable comments were made about these courses. Rather, group members tended to focus on the reasons why such courses were an inappropriate means of gaining professional development. These included cost, access,

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11. In 1991 no member of the DPLDP was enrolled in an award course at a tertiary institution.

content, and most importantly, relevance to the school situation.<sup>12</sup> In the words of one deputy principal these courses were,

"One day wonders! I've witnessed no long-term change in the way I operate after attending one of these courses. The costs involved in getting to one of these days is prohibitive and the long-term value is debatable."

Two members of the group were critical of the presentation or delivery styles employed by designers of these courses. They suggested that the limited time available (typically one or two days) necessitates the use of lecture and other content input strategies. Adult learning strategies are usually not utilized. Little time is given over to group discussion or personal reflection.

No evidence emerged to support a view that these types of courses could meet instructional leadership needs.

#### **MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROVIDED BY PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS**

Awareness about management training programs has been built up through the vigorous promotional strategies used by a number of management organisations. Four of the deputy principals stated that they received a steady flow of

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12. In an attempt to validate this finding, group members were challenged to assess the accuracy and significance of these impediments. All but one member of the group re-affirmed and re-stated the problems associated with participating in these types of programs. For this one group member many of the "impediments" were useful excuses for him to use to avoid participation.

brochures and pamphlets advertising a wide array of management development courses.

Three deputies praised the quality of presentation and the professionalism of management training programs they had attended. They were able to give specific examples in which their behaviours in school had changed as a result of attending such programs. Whilst most of these changes were in personal management areas, such as time management and planning, one deputy had made significant changes in his approach to staff management. In his case, a two day personnel management program attended in 1990 had been the stimulus for designing and implementing a school-wide system of staff supervision and appraisal. For this group member, the school's investment in course fees, travel, accommodation and teacher relief had been justified.

Apart from this one instance, there was no evidence to suggest that management training programs provided by private organisations would meet the development needs of deputy principals as instructional leaders in Narrogin schools.

#### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS LINKED TO PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Approximately one half of the DPLDP group had participated in conferences, workshops or seminars conducted by professional associations in the field of education - for example, the Reading Association and State School Teachers'

Union. These ranged from five day Reading conferences to two hour career planning seminars.

It was the general view that because these types of activities tend to have a specific focus, and because they are often single events, their impact is usually limited. Further, whilst most of those who had attended conferences had enjoyable memories of the experiences, there was little to indicate that their instructional leadership competencies had increased.

Two deputies noted that investment in a two or three day conference would often result in them gaining no more than two or three practical strategies for use at school. There was a sense of frustration that came from an inability to influence the content of conferences. It was also noted that conferences tend to offer little opportunity for active participation. Lectures and seminar presentations usually involve a one-way transfer of information.

For one group member, the value of professional conferences is limited:

"I belong to three professional associations (two curriculum based). These are all useful organizations and they do useful things. But, the support they can give me to develop skills is limited. They tend to hold one-off programs. These are of limited use to support deputy principals as administrators in modern schools."

Evidence emerged to support the view that professional development programs linked to professional associations can develop the instructional leadership skills of deputy



principals. However, the extent of such development is limited because of the constraints of time and the narrow content focus that typically characterize such programs.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED BY CENTRAL OR DISTRICT OFFICES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

For the majority of deputy principals, the primary source of professional development and in-service training had been programs provided by their employer, and delivered through either the Central or District office. Each of the deputies had participated in a wide range of these activities in recent years and for this reason it is difficult to make generalisations about the worth of Ministry initiated programs in developing instructional leadership. Comments from the deputies offer a range of opinions:

"At least at District or Central Office you know that the activity is going to relate to education and be up-to-date. These programs are often directly linked to school life. Most of the presenters are credible, having usually come from schools."

"Most in-services these days are nothing more than information exchange. You are invited to Perth or Narrogin to be given the latest information about the latest innovation. You very rarely get what I call professional development - an opportunity to discuss educational issues with colleagues and other credible educationalists."

"I've been involved in some useful programs at District office. The staff at Narrogin seem to be more in tune with the needs of school-based staff. Though I must admit that, apart from DPLDP, the programs I have been impressed with are curriculum based - and not specifically for administrators."

Six members of the group made reference to the advantages of having professional development activities run at Narrogin or in other nearby towns. There was general agreement that attending programs run in Perth or other regional centres place a significant strain on school resources. Four of these deputies indicated that disruption to the regular school program, teacher relief costs, travel and accommodation expenses, and dislocation to life were factors that made attendance at metropolitan courses unattractive.

The links drawn by group members between instructional leadership and Ministry programs were confined to areas of the curriculum. A number of group members discussed the importance of gaining updates in curriculum theory as a means of ensuring that their instructional leadership actions were soundly based.

#### OTHER SOURCES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There was some awareness by a few of the group members about sources of professional development that fall outside the categories already discussed. Several deputies had some knowledge of the operation of the principals' assessment centres and educational administration training institutes in other states of Australia or overseas. Once again, the limited knowledge they had of these establishments had been gleaned from promotional materials.

Participation in this type of development program had never been considered seriously because of the costs involved in travel, accommodation, course fees and other expenses.

#### A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE DPLDP AND OTHER SOURCES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Clearly, the deputy principals involved in the DPLDP were generally unaware of sources of professional development (other than DPLDP) which have the potential to specifically increase or enhance their instructional leadership potential. It is therefore unlikely that decision makers at the Narrogin District Education Office will be criticized for continuing to operate the DPLDP on the grounds that deputy principals believed in the ability of a program more suited to their needs.

Throughout the course of the interview process, members of the group frequently referred to features of the DPLDP in positive contrast to perceived inadequacies in alternative sources of professional development. Four of these features are worthy of mention. They highlight the capacity of the DPLDP to deliver instructional leadership training more effectively than other programs.

Five deputies commented favourably about the "on-going", "spaced-learning" structure of the DPLDP. One-day or one-week in-service programs were viewed as being far less effective than the two year program of one day-per-month

meetings which characterizes the DPLDP. One group member commented:

"I've got a shelf full of fancy files and conference booklets from previous in-service programs. Each one begins to collect dust one or two weeks after the end of the program. With the DPLDP you don't get the chance to neglect or forget the content or processes. You actually grow and develop throughout the years of the course."

In contrast to this liking for developmental programs, only one deputy enjoyed the flexibility of being able to target workshops, seminars or conferences as a means of addressing his specific professional needs. It could be inferred from this that for most of the group members participation in the DPLDP had negated or removed the need for alternative professional development programs.

A second strong feature was access to professional development opportunities of the magnitude offered by the DPLDP. The costs and disruption to school life associated with participating in training or development programs run outside the Narrogin district are considerable. When asked to explain why they had not considered participating in a variety of alternative development programs, six group members spoke of the practical problems associated with leaving their schools and travelling to Perth for one, two or more days. For one deputy, the advantages of a district-based program were clear:

"There is no way I could have given a commitment to a two-year program if it had been based in Perth. Travel costs to the school and further disruption to my family would have made it impossible.

It's good to see a quality program (DPLDP) coming to the district rather than what usually happens."

Thirdly, the pre-determined content of many programs was a source of concern for three deputies. From award courses at tertiary institutions to lecture topics at Reading conferences, there was seen to be little scope for participant intervention to allow modification to the content of the activity. Specifically, these deputies favoured professional interaction that allowed them to address topics which were meaningful and relevant to their own school situations. For this reason, the DPLDP was given high praise, whereas other program alternatives were criticized.

Finally, the majority of participants favoured programs which offered a high degree of interaction between participants. Group members frequently referred to the importance of utilizing adult learning principles in professional development programs. Their experiences had shown them that lectures and lengthy dissertations were far less effective strategies than were guided, structured discussions between colleagues about topics of mutual interest. Again, the DPLDP was given credit for promoting such interaction between participants.

Time and time again throughout the interview process (1989-90) the DPLDP was used, by members of the group, as the benchmark for assessing the value of alternative programs. Of their own volition, the deputies frequently referred to structural and operational aspects of the DPLDP as

reference points when commenting on other forms of professional development.

During the 1991 validation session, group members were asked to re-assess the evaluative statements comparing the DPLDP with alternative sources of professional development. The group were content to confirm their earlier statements without qualification. The DPLDP was seen as the most effective means of developing instructional leadership competencies. Statements (1991) from group members highlight this attitude:

"Many features of the DPLDP put it ahead of the alternatives: collegial support, flexibility, needs focussed ..."

"Even if all the practical obstacles to the alternative strategies were removed, the DPLDP would still offer the most effective professional development alternative"

"Elements of the other programs could cater for the needs of deputy principals as well or better than the DPLDP. But, as a total package, the DPLDP is the preferred choice because of its added features e.g. collegial support."

"We were in control, somewhat, of the direction of the program. We could suggest modifications we thought were appropriate."

#### **A COMPARISON OF THE DPLDP WITH A RANGE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES**

An analysis of the literature on effective inservice for school administrators conducted by Daresh and LaPlant (1984) provided the basis for a set of generalizable

propositions regarding the planning and implementation of effective inservice education (see Table 7).

**TABLE 7**

**Generalizable Propositions Regarding the Planning and Implementation of Effective Inservice Education**

(adapted from Daresh and LaPlant, 1984, pp. 2-3)

1. Effective inservice is directed towards local school needs.
2. Inservice participants need to be involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs.
3. Effective inservice is based on participant needs.
4. Active learning processes, rather than passive techniques such as lectures, are viewed as desirable and effective inservice instructional modes.
5. Inservice that is part of a long-term systematic staff development plan is more effective than a "one-shot", "short-term" program.
6. Local school inservice must be backed up by commitment of resources from the central office.
7. Effective inservice provides evidence of quality control, and is delivered by competent presenters.
8. Programs which enable participants to share ideas and provide assistance to one another are viewed as successful.
9. Inservice programs are effective when they are designed so that individual participant needs, interests and concerns are addressed.
10. Rewards and incentives, both intrinsic and extrinsic, must be evident to program participants.
11. Inservice activities should be provided during school time.
12. Effective inservice requires on-going evaluation.

These propositions are used as a checklist against which existing inservice programs can be assessed.

Daresh and LaPlant (1984) categorize inservice models into five basic types. These are the traditional model, institutes, competency-based programs, academies, and networking. This section of the Input Evaluation will utilize the five part typology and the twelve generalizable

propositions as the basis for evaluating the DPLDP against alternative inservice programs.

### The traditional model

Daresh and LaPlant used the term "traditional model" to cover all award courses conducted by universities or colleges. In the Western Australian situation, graduate diploma or other higher degree courses would be typical of this model.

Participants are generally assured of basic quality control in these courses and the content is usually the product of advanced planning by a professional educator. However, in a number of fundamental ways the DPLDP compares favourably with the traditional model as a means of meeting the professional development needs of deputy principals in the area of instructional leadership.

The processes used in the DPLDP are generally more interactive. Active learning processes and frequent opportunities to share ideas are characteristic of the program. Participants are encouraged to use real school experiences as the basis for analyzing educational theories and practical strategies. DPLDP sessions are held during normal school time, and both formative and summative evaluation techniques are a feature of the program.

Where university courses may expose school administrators to current instructional leadership theory, the DPLDP gives



participants the opportunity to critically examine theory and principles and then translate these into practice within their own school situations.

### Institutes

Institutes are short-term, topic-specific learning experiences. They differ from the other four models in that they are of short duration and deal with narrowly defined topics. Although they are perhaps better known as training events, Daresh and LaPlant (1984, p. 5) maintain that "... the pervasiveness of the institute is such that it cannot be ignored as a learning experience".

Although institutes are a convenient, low cost means of dealing with issues of immediate concern that can be designed quickly on issues of current relevance, they are an inappropriate strategy for bringing about long term change in the way deputy principals exercise instructional leadership in their schools.

The characteristics of institutes contrast starkly with those of the DPLDP. The limited time available to institute program presenters typically means that participants cannot be involved in setting the objectives for the program, and there is little opportunity for interaction between program presenters and participants. Communication tends to be one-way. Passive learning techniques limit the opportunity for participants to

examine and discuss the links between program content and the realities of school life.

Dareh and LaPlant (1984, p. 6) contend that, "Short-term training events, regardless of their claims, cannot be viewed as quick solutions to problems that require long-term commitment".

### Competency-based programs

By definition, competency-based programs attempt to customize inservice training to meet the specific development needs of individual school administrators. Individuals are assessed against a set of pre-determined criteria for effective school administration. Deficiencies are identified and targeted for improvement.

Designers of competency-based programs contend that an assessment approach leads to inservice design based on individual needs. However, Dareh and LaPlant observe that the individual school administrator has no part to play in drawing up the list of competencies against which they will be assessed. Competencies are prescribed.

Further, the primary focus of competency-based programs is on assessing competencies (identifying strengths and weaknesses). Less importance is placed on assisting individual school administrators to develop their skills and abilities in identified areas of weakness.

A direct comparison between the DPLDP and the competency-based model shows that the latter offers a more individualized approach to professional development. However, the focus on the individual is achieved by using a clinical model. The DPLDP, on the other hand, allows the individual group members to examine, debate, and shape the competencies associated with instructional leadership, and then practise and experiment with new techniques in their own school situations.

### Academies

The academy is an arrangement wherein a school district or state education department provides structured learning experiences to educators on an on-going basis. District principals associations, district deputy principals associations and the Centre for Educational Leadership are examples of "academies" in the Western Australian situation.

According to Daresh and LaPlant (1984, p. 9), the academy is similar to the traditional model of inservice, with two important differences. First, it is an "in-house" effort sponsored for and by practitioners without reliance on another institution such as a university. Second, participation is "generally based on an individual's personal motivation".

A number of the basic features of the academy approach to inservice mirror the positive elements of the DPLDP.

Academies provide a long-term structure to meet the identified needs of school administrators. They are established most often by a survey of needs of local participants. District associations are controlled and shaped largely by participants. Topics and issues tend to be generated from within.

Other features of academies are less impressive in terms of the propositions listed in Table 7. Most instruction is based on one-way communication, external consultants are frequently utilized for short periods, and the focus is often on the "here and now" rather than on the long term growth and development of individual school leaders.

### **Networking**

Networks are informal arrangements that emerge as a result of administrators seeking colleagues who share similar concerns and potential solutions to problems. Control over all aspects of this inservice arrangement rests with members of the network.

Many of the generalizable propositions (Table 7) regarding effective inservice education are evident in typical network sessions and activities. They directly engage participants in planning and implementing their activities. They allow participants to share and discuss ideas of common concern. They relate directly to the needs of the individual members. And once established, they tend to be

medium to long term structures. The incentive to belong to a network is often driven by intrinsic rewards.

A number of the other generalizable propositions regarding effective inservice are not typically characteristic of networks but are features of the DPLDP program. The DPLDP offers participants a long-term, systematic program of inservice within an environment of collegial support. Informal networking offers no such guarantee to participants. Without a formal program structure, networks can become little more than friendship groups of like minded administrators who meet regularly to discuss concerns. Evaluation of the operations of networks can also be conducted with little formality or precision.

Networks also tend to be created outside the formal structures of the education system. DPLDP groups typically operate with the endorsement and support of school districts, with inservice activities conducted during school hours.

The Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program compares favourably with the five inservice types described in this chapter. The DPLDP also ranks highly when it is analyzed directly in terms of the generalizable propositions developed by Daresh and LaPlant. It can be concluded that the DPLDP has the capacity to meet the inservice needs of deputy principals in the area of

instructional leadership better than the other inservice models discussed in this chapter.

## Chapter 8

### PROCESS EVALUATION FINDINGS

It is reasonable to expect that during the course of a two-year program of professional development, modifications will be made to the content and/or processes of the program to ensure that the needs of participants are met. In the case of the DPLDP it was anticipated from the outset that changes may have been necessary to reflect contextual differences between a Western Australian rural education district and the North American situation. Comparative educationists (Bereday, 1967; Tretheway, 1976; King, 1973) point out that attempts to import educational programs from other systems, without due consideration of cultural and system differences, can result in less than successful implementation.

The purpose of the process evaluation is to determine the extent to which the modifications to the planned program affected the capacity of the DPLDP to provide for the instructional leadership needs of deputy principals. Even if the DPLDP does meet the professional development needs of the deputies better than other programs it would be difficult to justify its continuation if, in order to make

it work in the Narrogin District, it has to be modified to the point of washing out the instructional leadership components.

Stufflebeam (1983) suggests that the real purpose of any process evaluation is not to prove but to improve. The findings from this evaluation will offer suggestions for improving the DPLDP for future implementation.

From the outset it should be noted that most of the deputies agreed to participate in the DPLDP with only limited knowledge of the content or operation of the program. They accepted the invitation to attend the "getting started" component of the program on the strength of information gained from sketchy promotional material (pamphlets and brochures) and from a brief verbal overview given by officers from the Narrogin Education Office.

This observation was confirmed by group members in 1991. They claimed, however, that the intensive, two day "getting started" session provided them with a clear overview of the DPLDP objectives and course content. The group rated the two day introduction as a valuable and essential component of the program.

Because of their limited knowledge and understanding of the program, the deputy principals were not well placed to make judgements about any modifications to it during the first year. In fact, many of the deputies were unaware that some



modifications had actually been made.<sup>13</sup> For this reason the process evaluation findings are based on data gathered from both the participants in the DPLDP and from the process observations of the program facilitators.

It should not be construed from this that the program facilitator was responsible for initiating all changes to the planned program in a unilateral or unconsultative manner. On a number of occasions (especially towards the end of the first year and throughout the second year) the deputy principals sought changes to both the content and the processes of the monthly sessions.

Further, the findings in the process evaluation are based not only on an analysis of changes that were actually made during the two years in which the Narrogin group was operating, but also on the views of both participants and facilitators about modifications which could have enhanced the effectiveness of the DPLDP.

Modifications to the DPLDP will be discussed under the following headings: changes to program objectives, personal professional development planning, literature substitution, "show and tell", in-basket, and the second year.

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13. Three members of the group rejected this assertion. They claim that the content of the "getting started" left them well placed to make judgements about subsequent program modifications.

## CHANGES TO PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Early in the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program participants are asked to examine the five stated objectives of the program. They are then given the opportunity to endorse or modify these objectives so that they are acceptable to all group members. In the case of the Narrogin group the objectives were accepted with a few minor changes to terminology and emphasis.<sup>14</sup> By and large, group members were willing to embark on a two year program with the five objectives of personal professional development, staff development, principles of learning, collegial support and continuous improvement.

Throughout the first year of the program an on-going challenge for the facilitator was to determine the links between the activities of the program and the five objectives accepted by the group. Towards the end of this year it became apparent that it was not always possible to find a direct relationship between specific activities or tasks and individual program objectives. For example, it was unclear whether the collegial support objective would be achieved by involving group members in pre-determined activities, or whether it would be achieved informally, as a by-product of the program.

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14. Minor changes were made to reflect the Western Australian context. For example, The term Deputy Principal replaced Assistant Principal.

Nevertheless, the facilitator considered it important, in the interests of the program trial, to provide balance across the five areas. It was this attempt at balance that prompted the first significant modification.

#### PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The concept of planning for personal professional development is introduced early in the program. Participants are invited to design, implement and monitor a plan over a three month period. Elements of, and criteria for, effective plans are discussed. Planning guides are provided as a starting point for the planning process. In order to reinforce the concept of personal professional development planning, the facilitators set aside time in subsequent sessions for group members to share and critique their plans. This was a significant modification to the program as it involved making changes to the agendas of subsequent sessions. It also gave added importance to the role of development planning as a long term change strategy.

Initially this modification was accepted by the group as being a valuable addition to the program. However, by the fifth session it became apparent that only one or two members were in a position to prepare and share documented reports on the progress of their plans. Towards the end of

the first year this modification was discontinued<sup>15</sup>.

The possible reasons for the failure of this initiative were explored with the group in the 1991 validation session. The general consensus was that the process for selecting focus areas for professional development planning and development was inadequate. In the words of one group member,

"The pressure to select a topic 'on the spot' meant that the exercise was unnatural. It became more of a chore than a useful development activity. At times I felt guilty because I hadn't done my homework in my chosen area."

The method of topic selection may not have been the only reason for failure. The deputies were given ample opportunity to select new development areas. The opportunity was simply not accepted.

The following comment from one deputy principal may explain the real reason for the failure of this aspect of the program.

"The whole process was too structured. It looked good on paper, but I couldn't implement it. Sharing, helping and critiquing did happen in the group, but mainly in informal ways."

It is interesting to note that, in 1991, three members of the group claimed to have utilized the processes of

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15. This failure of structured planning for personal growth within collegial support groups is consistent with the findings from studies conducted in the United States (see Sharp, 1983 and Hyland, 1985)

personal professional development planning in isolation from the DPLDP program. In one case the deputy had successfully introduced the planning techniques to other members of the staff at his school.

The focus area for personal professional development selected by members of the DPLDP group are presented in Table 8.

**TABLE 8**  
**Focus Areas for Personal Professional Development Plans**

GROUP MEMBER	FOCUS AREAS
1.	Communication processes (2 group members)
2.	Timetabling with computers
3.	School development concepts
4.	Documenting school development plans
5.	Communication between administration and staff
6.	Computers - in education and for administration
7.	Time management
8.	School development implementation

The majority of group members chose to focus on school based issues (school development, communication, curriculum implementation and monitoring) that require the development of instructional leadership capacities.

The potential existed, therefore, for group members to use the collegial support group as a mechanism for exploring

and developing specific aspects of their instructional leadership capacities. But it did not eventuate.

Given this potential, and despite the experience of the Narrogin group, it can be suggested that setting aside a short period of time in each monthly session to share the progress of personal plans should be re-tested by subsequent DPLDP groups.

#### LITERATURE SUBSTITUTION

One modification supported by all group members, and which served to enhance the instructional leadership focus of the program was, literature substitution. Early in the program it became apparent that many of the articles and some of the theoretical models presented in the DPLDP had been written or developed during the 1970s and early 1980s. Facilitators and group members endorsed the practise of substituting contemporary input material wherever possible. It was also felt that attempts should be made to substitute some of the program material researched and developed in North America with Australian equivalents.

These twin concepts of currency and context were considered to be significant modifications by group members:

"Articles by Australian (and especially Western Australian) researchers have to be more relevant to what we experience each day in our schools. This is especially true when analyzing system level developments such as school planning, monitoring and accountability."

"Some of the program material had to be supplemented by more up-to-date readings. But this was a healthy addition."

In total, DPLDP material was substituted or supplemented on seven occasions by facilitators or group members. The content of much of this material reflects aspects of instructional leadership. Table 9 contains details of the literature substitution.

**TABLE 9**  
**Literature Changes in the DPLDP (Narrogin Group)**

**1. SUBSTITUTE MATERIAL**

The Complete Inservice Staff Development Program  
(Ryan, 1987)

Self Analysis Diary for Educational Administrators  
(Duignan, 1987)

School Development Planning and the Curriculum  
(Western Australian Ministry of Education, 1989)

The Change Agent's Guide to Innovation  
(Havelock, 1971)

**2. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL**

The Changing Role of the Assistant Principal  
(Panyako and Rorie, 1987)

A Shared Perspective on Effective School Leadership  
(Campbell-Evans, 1990)

Fulfilling the Promise of Excellence  
(Dufour and Eaker, 1987)

**"SHOW AND TELL" SESSIONS**

Towards the end of the first year, and throughout the second year of the DPLDP, group members initiated a "show and tell" session into their regular meetings. During five of these sessions, time was set aside to allow group

members to table and discuss documents, school practices, work samples, in-service information, and current information about the education system. On occasions this amounted to little more than an exchange of gossip about recent events within individual schools and within the education system generally<sup>16</sup>. More often, however, these sessions provided a valuable opportunity for an exchange of information and ideas. When interviewed, six deputies commented on the success of this modification to the program. In supporting the change, group members referred to the limited opportunities that exist for deputy principals to gain information and new ideas from colleagues in a rural education district. "Show and tell" sessions met this need.

As in the case of the substituted program material, the topics for "show and tell" sessions can also be linked to the instructional leadership roles of deputy principals. For example, during the first two years, the following topics were presented and dealt with at these sessions:

- \* In-school communication systems.
- \* School development planning documents.
- \* School ethos and mission statements.
- \* Curriculum implementation strategies.
- \* Performance management systems.
- \* Staff development workshop agendas.
- \* Student recording and reporting systems.
- \* Financial management templates.
- \* A problem solving model.

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16. At the validation session the majority of the group questioned this observation and considered it to be inaccurate. They insisted that the informal processes used to exchange information should not be construed as mere gossip sessions, and that the information exchanged was extremely useful.



There is a clear relationship between the topics chosen for discussion in "show and tell" sessions and the components of instructional leadership as presented in the literature review typology: vision, information and action.<sup>17</sup>

#### IN-BASKET PROBLEM SOLVING

The concept of "in-basket" problem solving is introduced to the group early in the program. Group members are encouraged to bring real life problems, concerns or issues to the group and have them dealt with through a structured process which includes clarification, brainstorming and explanation. The in-basket process allows each group member the opportunity to suggest alternative courses of action to a colleague with a specific problem. A range of strategies for dealing with a specific problem or issue is generated. Individual deputy principals can consider the merits of the leadership strategies suggested by their colleagues.

The findings from this evaluation clearly point to the in-basket process as being one of the most valued aspects of the DPLDP:

"The bonding that took place within the group was a real eye-opener. I wouldn't have believed it possible. The level of sharing of complex and highly personal issues was amazing.

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17. This relationship was discussed during the validation session. The group supported the accuracy of this observation after reflecting on the specific content of these "show and tell" discussion topics.

The in-basket process was the means by which such sharing came about."

"The structured approach to in-basket gives you confidence to speak openly and honestly. Through this activity I learnt a lot about different strategies to use to deal with situations in school. Examining real school issues is far more useful than dealing with hypotheticals."

There was a willingness on the part of the majority of deputies to voluntarily bring to the group problems of personal significance. On more than one occasion the group chose to deal with two in-basket topics rather than deny a group member the opportunity to share a leadership problem with the group. This was a departure from the DPLDP program structure.

The Narrogin district deputy principals' willingness to use the group as a mechanism for problem solving mirrored the findings of a United States study of a principals' collegial support group (see Sharp, 1983). Commenting specifically on the in-basket process, Sharp (1983, p. 105) observed that,

...[in-basket] problems were voluntarily shared by the principals because they were sensing a non-threatening, trusting group atmosphere. The principals were risk-taking by announcing to the group that they had a problem.

Mid-way through the first year of the program the facilitators observed that a number of the topics offered for in-basket processing were problems or issues that were common to many, if not all of the group members. Examples of such topics included: poor communication within school, difficulties in establishing decision making groups,

negative attitudes by community members towards involvement in school affairs, and difficulties in organizing relief teachers. In response to this situation it was decided to modify future sessions to accommodate "group in-baskets" to deal with these common problems.

This modification was received favourably. As one member said:

"The group in-basket is a time efficient way of dealing with issues that concern us all. In a way it can be seen as building collegiality - we're all working to find answers to a common problem."

Group in-baskets successfully encourage group members to examine their own leadership strategies in a non-threatening environment. Individuals can test out their proposed solutions against those of others without having to directly explain or defend them.

This positive assessment was endorsed by all but one member of the group. For the dissenting deputy the process was threatening and therefore unproductive. He found the in-basket process difficult to participate in. The pressure to respond with workable solutions was too great. As he said, "I need more time to think about problems and their possible solutions".

The in-basket concept (and by inference, the rationale for the whole collegial support group program) was challenged by one group member on the grounds that it may be inconsistent with recent developments within the Western

Australian education system to support administrative teams in schools.

Campbell-Evans (1990, p. 19) believes that as we move into the 1990s, "... the school executive team will become the administrative norm of the primary school". She supports the view that opportunities for the professional development of administrators will be realised within the context of a "... supportive, collegial school executive team".

If indeed the executive team becomes the primary unit for instructional leadership and for the professional development of administrators, then it becomes pertinent to examine the viability of collegial support groups comprising deputy principals from many different schools. One DPLDP group member questioned the appropriateness of having a group of peers examining leadership issues when, in reality, solutions had to be worked out at the school level between members of the school administration.

This concern was put to the group during the 1991 validation process. It was regarded as interesting but inconsistent with the reality of Western Australian schools at this point in time. The vision of schools being led by harmonious executive teams was considered naive. One deputy described this projection as "... the stuff that fairy tales are made of!". The general view was that openness and trust were features sadly missing from the relationships that existed in their executive teams.

On balance, it appears that the DPLDP provides a structure for deputies to discuss and share their experiences of instructional leadership. It encourages participants to explore the concepts of school vision, managing information and leadership action. But, it cannot deliver the hands-on, action based professional development that school administrative teams can provide in the school setting.

On more than one occasion, participants in the DPLDP discussed the merits of having collegial support groups structured on the basis of administrative teams in schools. Unfortunately, any assessment of the viability of such groups lies outside the parameters of this evaluation.

#### THE SECOND YEAR OF THE PROGRAM

The Deputy Principals Leadership Development Program is structured to allow participants the choice of concluding the program at the end of the first year or pursuing a second year of professional development. If the option of continuing is accepted, the group assumes a good deal of responsibility for designing the program for the second year.

When the Narrogin group met for their last 1989 DPLDP, a decision was taken to continue the program into a second year, and to set aside part of the first session to plan the program for 1990. Planning for the new year included identifying and prioritising professional development

needs, assigning planning tasks to individual members, deciding which aspects of the DPLDP structure to retain from the first year, and other procedural matters. The decisions that were made during this first session provide valuable information for this process evaluation.

Group members were requested to consider their current professional development needs prior to attending the planning session in 1990. A simple process was used to combine and then prioritise the professional development needs of all group members. This information is presented in Table 10.

**TABLE 10**  
**Professional Development Needs of DPLDP Group Members**  
**at the Commencement of the Second Year of the Program (1990)**

Legal issues in schools	9
Managing school resources	7
Evaluation / Accountability in schools	6
Staff professional development	5
Personal career planning	5
Curriculum implementation and monitoring	3
School development processes	3
Management information systems	2
System updates (information from central and/or district offices)	2
Public speaking skills	1
Public relations	1
Interview techniques	1
Office management	1

The numbers represent the importance attached to the topic  
(highest number = most important topic)

A simple analysis of this list of perceived needs indicates that the deputies, as a group, still wished to pursue issues that relate to both instructional leadership and general administration. However, the priority ranking clearly demonstrates a change in emphasis. At the commencement of the second year the interest of the group was focussed primarily on instructional leadership matters. Six of the eight highest ranking topics relate directly to the role of deputy principal as instructional leader. Topics such as office management, public speaking and interview techniques now appeared to be less important to the group.

The Narrogin group used the priority ranking of needs to select six themes that would form the framework for the program in the second year. The six themes were legal issues in schools, school development planning and implementation, staff development through curriculum implementation, managing resources in schools, and evaluation and accountability for student outcomes.

The findings from the context evaluation component of this study showed that, at the commencement of the program, the majority of group members nominated general administrative knowledge and skills before aspects of instructional leadership as their most pressing areas for professional growth. It is intriguing to find that at the time when the group members were given the capacity to modify the program's emphasis on instructional leadership (at the

commencement of the second year), they choose not to do so. The topics they selected to form the basis of the program in 1990 were strongly linked to instructional leadership.

It is interesting to speculate on why this was the case. Why had aspects of instructional leadership assumed greater importance in the minds of deputy principals?

Changes in schools and within the education system generally may be partly responsible. Towards the end of the 1980s the move to decentralize and transfer decision making responsibilities to the school level of the system brought with it a clear indication that the role of school administrators must change. Increasing responsibility for resource utilization and staff management, with a corresponding emphasis on accountability for student outcomes, signalled a significant modification to the traditional roles of all members of school executive teams. It may be that throughout the course of 1989 members of the Narrogin DPLDP began to understand and accept this changing situation. The design of the second year of the program may represent tangible evidence of an increased level of understanding of the changing role of the deputy principal.

It could also be argued that members of the group were having their requirements for training in general administrative matters met elsewhere. There is some evidence to suggest that as schools gained greater control over funding for professional development, a significant number of school administrators participated in a range of



management training activities. Information gathered informally by officers at the Narrogin District Education Office during the period 1988-91 supports this view. The need to develop skills in areas such as time management, public speaking, administrative computing and office procedures may have been met through participation in programs other than DPLDP.

Another explanation for this change in focus may be with the DPLDP itself. Throughout 1989 the program had focussed on the importance of the instructional leadership function of school administrators. By examining principles of learning, models for purposeful staff development and many other aspects of instructional leadership, individual group members may have begun to accept the view that general administrative capabilities are only tools with which deputy principals can exercise the leadership required to bring about desired student outcomes.

The validation process allowed for these hypothesised explanations to be tested. Group members found it difficult to pin-point with certainty the reason for the apparent change in focus for their professional development. However, the group did accept one of the suggested reasons as the most probable.

The majority of deputies agreed that participation in the first year of the DPLDP had influenced the way they operated in their schools. They were beginning to look beyond the technical/administrative functions they once

considered to be so important. They were beginning to accept the importance of the instructional leadership role. A comment from one deputy expresses this view:

"My first few months as deputy principal had been spent performing a wide range of clerical and administrative tasks. I kept saying 'yes' to every request from teachers and the boss. The program [DPLDP] encouraged me to question what I was doing in the school, and I started to view the role quite differently. Interaction with other deputies and the content of the program gave me the background to accept a role more akin to instructional leadership, and less like a school secretary or messenger boy".

In the discussion that preceded the structuring of the second year, members of the group examined the balance that should exist in the program between theory and practice. While there was general agreement that the first year's program had been a successful blend of both, a minority of deputies clearly favoured a stronger emphasis on the practical application of leadership concepts during the second year. For one deputy this change of emphasis was seen as a natural progression:

"You can spend a lot of valuable time immersed in the theory of educational administration without testing it out where it really matters - in school. As a group we need to continue to examine theories of leadership, learning and staff development. But, we have to go beyond the academia ..... We need to examine the consequences of implementing the theory. Some of our most profitable discussions have come from analyzing what we have tried to do with staff and students."

Other members of the group argued strongly to retain a theoretical base as a means of ensuring the integrity of

the program. They were concerned that a program based solely on analyzing the leadership behaviour of deputy principals in the school setting, without reference to research findings and theoretical constructs, could become introspective and degenerative. There was a real fear that the second year could become little more than a "pooling of ignorance" about leadership in schools.

By the end of the planning day it was agreed that each of the sessions in the second year would include a presentation and analysis of some aspect of current educational theory and an examination of the implications of the theory on school practices. This balance was achieved throughout the six remaining sessions.

#### PROCESS EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS

Both facilitators and participants expressed the view that the modifications made to the DPLDP (during the first year) to ensure relevance and successful implementation cannot be interpreted as having significantly altered the program in terms of rationale, content or delivery style. Modifications made to the program can best be described as fine tuning.

The findings from the context evaluation indicate that the effectiveness of the DPLDP as a program for developing deputy principals as instructional leaders depended, in large part, on the willingness of participants to focus on

aspects of instructional leadership in various program activities. It was also apparent that this would vary from one DPLDP group to the next. In the case of the Narrogin group the findings clearly show that aspects of instructional leadership became focus areas for development with the majority of participants.

During the 1991 validation session there was group consensus that the DPLDP was implemented successfully without the need for significant changes to either content or structure. Modifications that were made during 1989 and 1990 were seen as minor and designed primarily to enhance the program. However, the program would still have been successful without these changes.

## Chapter 9

# PRODUCT EVALUATION FINDINGS

In the final analysis the worth of any professional development program should be judged on the outcomes that result for participants and for the system in which they operate.

Arguably, a decision to continue to conduct the DPLDP in Narrogin District should only be made if the program delivers positive outcomes. From the viewpoint of instructional leadership it is difficult to justify the program if it fails to maintain or increase the knowledge and skills of deputy principals in the areas of school vision, information management and leadership action.

Over the course of a two-year program of professional development a wide range of outcomes is likely. Outcomes can be categorized as positive or negative, intended or unintended. The focus for this product evaluation will be on the outcomes related to instructional leadership. Its primary purpose is to determine the extent to which the DPLDP has increased the capacity of group members to operate effectively as instructional leaders in their schools.

The findings of the product evaluation are based on the deputy principals' perceptions of the outcomes of the program. Relevant data was gathered directly from individual deputies during interviews and from statements and disclosures made during the regular program sessions. As outlined in the methodology, no attempt was made to establish whether these outcomes actually occurred, only that they were perceived by the group members as having occurred. Conducting a full scale product evaluation would require substantial resources and extend this study well beyond what can be legitimately expected. It would involve the collection of data in the nine schools represented by the DPLDP group members using a wide variety of monitoring techniques.

The researcher was also faced with the difficulty of determining the extent to which the changes experienced by group members, in the area of instructional leadership, were the direct result of participation in the DPLDP. It is acknowledged that numerous other forces may have influenced the behaviour and attitudes of the deputy principals during the period 1989-1991.

#### **OUTCOMES RELATED TO THE SCHOOL VISION COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The extent to which the DPLDP has led to an acceptance, on the part of the deputy principals, of the concept of school vision as a logical starting point for the exercise of

effective instructional leadership, can be explored in two ways - by behavioural change in schools or by deputy principals' articulating their commitment to the concept. The findings from this study clearly show that while deputies now accept that a shared vision for a school is an integral component of instructional leadership, there have been limited opportunities for them to take a leading role in articulating and developing the concept in schools.

Acceptance of the concept was clearly expressed:

"Regular interaction with other deputies (during the DPLDP sessions) has led me to question many of the things we do in schools. I now regularly ask myself the question - what is the purpose for doing what I'm doing? What will be the outcomes? Then I realise that, as a staff, we need to sit down and work out what we are trying to achieve in our school. This will focus my work much more."

"Of all the processes in the Ministry's school development policy, setting a school purpose statement is probably the most valuable. If you don't know what you are trying to achieve the day-to-day operations can become meaningless."

"Without the opportunity provided by the (DPLDP) program I may have become a little sceptical about this aspect (school purpose) of school development. Discussing school mission or purpose gave me a clearer understanding of the importance of this first step."

A review of the literature on instructional leadership (see Chapter 4) shows that developing a vision for a school becomes meaningful when it is shared and accepted, curriculum focussed, and based on a few shared central values. For a number of the deputy principals the real value of developing a school vision only became apparent

when they began to explore the links between vision, curriculum and student outcomes. A number of comments reflect this realisation:

"Focusing on curriculum matters forces you to concentrate on the important aspects of school life - that is, getting kids to learn. If you keep this focus you can block out a lot of the trivial bits of administration. Mind you - this isn't always easy to do."

"The time we spent looking at principles of learning was excellent. To be honest, I haven't given this much thought since my college days. It really is critical. It gives real meaning to the school purpose statement - it links purpose to student achievement."

"Teachers can see more relevance in a school purpose statement if it is about students and curriculum. This is what they do every day."

The acceptance of the importance of developing a shared vision for a school is a significant outcome of this program. On a number of occasions, discussions about the role of the deputy principal and the function of a school as an organization returned to purpose or vision as a necessary starting point. A growing realization developed throughout the program that the actions of the deputies could and should be related to the achievement of pre-determined educational outcomes for students rather than being a series of unrelated, mechanical administrative tasks.

As mentioned earlier, acceptance of the need for school vision was not always matched by direct involvement in school vision setting by the deputy principals in schools.



Although a small number of deputies could claim to have been active in this area, several factors frustrated attempts by the majority. Observations from three group members highlight these blockages:

"The attitude and energy of the Principal can make or break this type of innovation. In my case he (the principal) is happy to talk about school purpose but little action follows. You need a united approach from the administration in order to convince staff that this is worthwhile."

"It's difficult to get a whole staff approach to school purpose. I've found it difficult to get them (the teachers) to think of issues outside their own classrooms .... There is also a lot of healthy cynicism about school purpose caused by the industrial situation."

"Getting experienced teachers to question what they are doing is a threatening business. Some of the old hands really doubt the value in spending time talking about a mission statement. They can see little relevance in it. This can rub off on the other teachers too."

The 1990 and 1991 Memorandums of Agreement between the Ministry of Education and the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia, required principals to commence implementation of the Ministry's policy on school development. The critical first stage of this policy involves the development of a school purpose statement. The effect on schools of making school purpose or vision a mandatory requirement under the provisions of an industrial agreement was questioned by deputies. Half the group favoured the change, claiming that all teachers would be compelled to participate in the process of developing a school purpose. Others felt the move would be counter-productive because meaningful discussion about this matter

could only take place when teachers genuinely valued the purpose of the exercise.

In summary, one outcome of the DPLDP has been a heightened awareness and a growing acceptance, on the part of the deputies, of the value to schools of developing a shared vision for the future. The findings also indicate that the direct impact on schools was dependent upon the disposition of the school principals and the readiness of the staff to explore the concept. It is also worth noting that for two of the group members the notion of developing a school vision, while accepted in principle, was rated as a low priority item in their work in school - perhaps seen as something to be addressed when the day-to-day administrative tasks were completed. For these deputies the DPLDP had done little to alter their views on the leadership role of the deputy principal.

Session four in the first year of the program focuses on the "role of the school administrator in change" and on the corresponding theme "creating, articulating and selling a vision to staff". From interviews conducted towards the end of the second year approximately half the participants made reference to the activities in session four as being important experiences in the development of their skills as change agents. The role of the deputy principal in bringing about change in the attitudes and behaviours of teachers was subsequently discussed on various occasions during both years of the program. One deputy put it succinctly:

"If you are serious about being a school administrator then a significant part of your working life will be spent getting others to change the way they currently do things. To be successful at this you really need to be able to paint a picture of what the change will look like - this is the key."

Another aspect of the DPLDP that increased the deputies' acceptance of the concept of school vision was the examination of principles of learning. On three occasions the program requires participants to examine current practices in their schools against accepted principles of learning. In an indirect but powerful way the deputies were obliged to focus on school purpose and school vision by examining the strategies that were being employed by teachers. In other words, the means could not be examined without reference to the ends. As one deputy explained:

"The program (DPLDP) has changed the way I interact with and supervise teachers. In the past I was always looking at the way they taught as an end in itself. Now I ask a lot of questions about what they are trying to achieve and why - it's a much more meaningful approach. Some teachers find this change difficult to cope with in some areas of their teaching. They find it difficult to visualize the final product."

Early in the second year of the program the group chose to structure one of their regular meetings on the theme of school development. Input for the session was provided by an officer from the Organizational Development Unit of the Ministry of Education.<sup>18</sup> For approximately three hours

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18. During 1991 this unit was re-structured and re-named the Schools Improvement and Accountability Branch.

the group discussed the elements of the Ministry's school development policy. The rationale for the development of a statement of school purpose was discussed at length. The impact of this session on two of the group participants was profound:

"I found it to be the most useful day we have spent together in this program. For the first time I think I'm in step with the Ministry's thinking on school development. The input from (...) was excellent. Before this session I had been openly critical about having to spend time writing a purpose statement and preparing performance indicators. I now know that these are essential."

"The session with (...) was excellent. If all teachers, deputies and principals had the opportunity to talk through this model the way we did, the Ministry would get full commitment."

The significance of this session was re-stated by the majority of group members during the validation meeting. There was general agreement that the session gave deputies the opportunity to clarify the instructional leadership function within the structure provided by the school development model.

The collegial support element of the DPLDP also worked to reinforce the concept of school vision as a foundation for instructional leadership. The willingness of group members to discuss their attempts to introduce the concept in schools, informed and validated the actions of others.

The importance of a collegial atmosphere cannot be over

stated.<sup>19</sup> Time and time again the regular DPLDP sessions were punctuated with real life examples of where group members had experimented with leadership behaviours.

On one occasion (during the second year of the program) a disclosure about a failed attempt to generate a commitment to school vision sparked a useful discussion about strategies for promoting the concept. The deputy concerned had set aside time in a staff development day to introduce the concept to all staff. He found the response from the staff less than enthusiastic, with a few vocal teachers using the occasion to give voice to their cynical attitudes towards the central office of the Ministry. The DPLDP group was given the benefit of this experience and advice from the deputy that, given his time over again, he would have done a lot of "ground work" with individual teachers prior to floating the concept with the whole staff.

#### OUTCOMES RELATED TO THE INFORMATION COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The DPLDP appears to have had a significant impact on the development of the deputy principals as instructional

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19. At the conclusion of the validation session, group members were invited to reflect on the extent to which the objectives of the DPLDP had been achieved. It was the unanimous view of the group that collegial support was the most significant outcome from this program. The deputies privately ranked the outcomes in order of achievement. The aggregate response was:

1. Collegial support
2. Reflections on learning
3. Staff development
4. Personal professional development
5. Continuous improvement

leaders in the area of information management. The findings show that for the majority of deputies significant changes occurred in their approach to gathering, analyzing and utilizing information for decision making in schools. Specifically, changes were made in the management of information regarding curriculum, teacher performance, student assessment and reporting student outcomes.

It is not possible to ascertain the extent to which this development was a product of the first structured year of the DPLDP, or an outcome of the second year (the year in which the group chose to focus on various aspects of school development, including the management of information). The findings show that the gains made in this area varied from one deputy to the next and were initiated by different components of the program. The following examples illustrate this diversity.

**Example one:**

1. Institutional goal setting and action planning is a component of the DPLDP introduced in session five of the first year. Participants are given the opportunity to select an area of their school's operations for development planning and action. The plan prepared by one of the deputy principals is reproduced below.

**Institutional goal:**

- to improve teacher planning and programming skills with particular emphasis on -
  - a. programming from an identified needs basis
  - b. integration of curriculum strands
  - c. developing an understanding of evaluation methods

- d. using the results as the basis for future programming

#### Action:

1. collect samples of programmes which demonstrate goals
2. workshop activities on programming (modelling, planning, linking)
3. positive/constructive feedback after viewing programmes
4. examination of syllabi entries with regard to curriculum integration
5. peer tutoring - help from other members of staff
6. early Childhood Education group to assist with K-3 strategies

#### Assessing my action:

1. observation of classroom practices
2. feedback from staff (formal/informal)
3. future programmes - observations

A copy of the progress report prepared by the deputy and distributed during session six (1989) for discussion by the DPLDP group is presented below.

#### Progress Report

1. I thought about programming issues and decided, after examining a number of programs, to use the expertise within the staff combined with outside assistance. This overcame resistance from hardened campaigners and ill feeling from those who considered their work ideal.
2. I organized two workshops - lower primary and upper primary, using school development funds for relief teachers.
3. The whole thing was approached with an experimental outlook where everyone, including me, was on new ground in some aspects.
4. Tactics used included observation and brainstorming, both of which were successful.
5. All ideas were recorded as an information base for future action.
6. Plans were made, based on the information base, for further development in areas of need, e.g. evaluation.
7. Time allocations have been considered to allow teachers time to work together to write programmes.

8. Feedback, oral and action, has been positive and teachers are co-operating with each other.

The outcomes from this activity were numerous. For the deputy it was an opportunity to exercise instructional leadership in a school setting - to plan and implement a process for generating and utilizing information for improved curriculum planning. During an interview conducted early in the second year of the program the deputy reflected on the activity:

"It's the first time I have systematically gathered information about a school issue and used it to improve what is happening. Having group members view my plan didn't result in any changes, but the support was useful. They told me I was on the right track."

For this group member the activity was valuable. However, it should be noted that only four members of the DPLDP group actively implemented the institutional goal setting and action planning process. Of these, only two indicated that the process had resulted in positive outcomes.

Example two:

During a "show and tell" session (see Chapter 8) held early in the second year of the program, a deputy principal from a district high school introduced and generated a lengthy discussion about a system for recording and reporting student outcomes. The system had been developed in an attempt to integrate procedures for assessing student outcomes with a meaningful reporting format for parents.



The DPLDP group received an account of how the system had been developed by teachers and school administrators at the school with the assistance of external consultants.

The processes and instruments that comprised the system were consistent with the concept of a management information system contained in the Ministry of Education's Policy and Guidelines on School Development.

Systems for managing information about student outcomes became the focus for discussion during two subsequent DPLDP sessions. The initial "show and tell" disclosure was the stimulus for at least two other deputies to initiate reviews of assessment, recording and reporting procedures in their schools. For the remainder of 1990, and into 1991, these deputies shared their experiences (by telephone and at district meetings).

**Example three:**

One deputy principal successfully introduced the in-basket program solving process into his school, as a means of generating information about aspects of his school's operations, prior to taking leadership action. The steps involved in in-basket were explained to teachers at a full staff meeting held towards the middle of the second year of the DPLDP. A number of in-baskets were then conducted during the remainder of the school year.

The strengths and limitations of the technique, for this deputy principal, are highlighted in the following

statements made by him:

"In-basket works best when you are addressing a curriculum issue of an issue that relates directly to students. People really open up and generate a lot of useful ideas .... On the one occasion I used In-basket to deal with a staff problem, the response was not so good. There was a reluctance to give honest responses. Staff were guarded in their responses."

"The technique forced everyone to contribute some ideas. You also pick up the different attitudes people hold towards issues. When we were working on student motivation and self-esteem we generated a long list of ideas and strategies. The staff seem to enjoy the freedom to contribute."

"The changes that were implemented after In-baskets were well received. It's all about participation and ownership .... As a deputy you feel more confident to make changes when you have looked at the information generated from an In-basket."

Successful implementation of the in-basket process had another positive outcome for this deputy. He reported that his credibility as an instructional leader in the school increased as a result of introducing an effective process for focussing staff attention on key curriculum areas. It was his first experience of leading the staff in a review of current curriculum practice, and it had been a success.

#### Example four:

The "principles of learning" activities conducted in sessions two, six and seven resulted in significant changes in the leadership behaviour of one group member.

After comparing accepted principles of learning with programs and practices currently existing in his school,

he changed his approach to curriculum evaluation. At the conclusion of 1989 he commented:

"One of the sessions on principles of learning motivated me to start asking teachers some hard questions about what they were doing in their classrooms. I started asking questions about what and how they were teaching."

"From checking programs and from classroom observations I began to gather useful information about teaching strategies being used in the school."

"I guess I had some doubts about what was happening in classrooms prior to the DPLDP but this session (principles of learning) sparked me into doing something positive."

On-going curriculum evaluation is an integral component of instructional leadership. Gathering and analyzing information about curriculum content and curriculum delivery are essential steps to be undertaken prior to initiating change in existing school practices.

For this deputy principal the principles of learning activities had been the stimulus to become active in this area of instructional leadership. He acknowledged that this change in approach had enhanced his credibility as a leader in the school. Teachers (experienced as well as inexperienced) began to relate to him as a leader in the field of curriculum rather than as a school administrator.

Curriculum evaluation continued to be a primary focus of his work during 1990 and 1991. Moreover, the exploration of principles of learning in 1989 prompted him to undertake post-graduate study in the field of Reading Education.

**Example five:**

One of the stated outcomes of the DPLDP is to have "deputy principals examine the principles of adult learning, a research-based model of in-service, effective staff developmental strategies, and a professional development planning model." Program activities related to this outcome proved timely for DPLDP group members.

During 1988 and 1989 Western Australian government schools were given increasing control over the provision of professional development of teachers. The School Development Grant was introduced as an annual payment to schools to cover the costs incurred in staff in-servicing. An exploration of professional development theories and practices at a time when schools were gaining increased responsibilities in this area resulted in certain outcomes for members of the DPLDP group and their schools.

The most significant outcome was an acceptance, on the part of many group members, that staff development should reflect school vision and the development priorities of the school.

Early in the program four members of the DPLDP group held the view that resources for professional development should be divided equally amongst all teachers on a school staff on the grounds of equity. Further, they accepted that individual teachers should be given responsibility for identifying interest areas for their own development. This view changed during 1989. The element of the DPLDP that led

to a re-appraisal of this teacher-centred approach to professional development was an analysis of four models of staff development presented by Caldwell and Marshall (1982). The four models are "teacher centred", "central office", "smorgasbord" and "school improvement".

With the teacher-centred approach, "programs focus directly on the perceived needs of the teachers, with the needs of the administrative staff and the institution only incidentally considered" (Caldwell and Marshall, 1982, p. 32). Needs assessment is typically informal through staff conversations and interviews. Program development emphasizes high interest workshops and other activities, which may include both academic and personal interest sessions.

Over the course of three months support for this approach weakened. Members of the group began to acknowledge that the "school-improvement" approach was more in line with the Ministry of Education's twin policies of school development and school decision making.

According to Caldwell and Marshall (1982, p. 33) the school improvement approach is a more complete approach to staff development than the other models because it sets out to "provide growth experiences for both the instructional and the administrative staffs based upon assessment of the personal/professional needs of individuals and determined needs of the institution". It is assumed that if the individually identified needs of professional staff are met

within the context of institutional goals, the best possible education can be provided for the students.

Implementation of the "school-improvement" approach in staff development requires school administrators to exercise instructional leadership. It can only operate successfully when decisions are based on reliable information about school priorities and teacher strengths and weaknesses.

Ideally, a sophisticated management information system should be in place to discriminate between the capacities of different teachers and to highlight, over time, the achievement levels of individuals and groups of students.

The complexity of this instructional leadership function became apparent to one group member when he attempted to introduce the concept to his staff.

"Most staff can see the value in linking P.D. to curriculum priorities but they still want their two or three days per year. Some still see professional development as a kind of reward ... and if they see others getting a day in Perth, they want one too!"

"You can spend time with teachers identifying areas of development, but finding appropriate professional development is very difficult. Many still want to go to whatever is being run at District Office or in Perth."

"The principal likes giving each teacher one or two days each year. It's easy to administer and it seems fair."

## OUTCOMES RELATED TO THE ACTION COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The potential of school vision statements and management information systems can only be realised when school administrators take action to make appropriate changes in their schools. That is, instructional leadership will only result in positive outcomes for schools when principals and deputy principals act on information to move the school closer to the established vision. The deputies reported that while participation in the DPLDP increased the knowledge and skills of deputies in the action component of instructional leadership, they had limited opportunities to perform as instructional leaders in their schools.

In 1989 and 1990 there were forces at work that restricted the involvement of deputy principals in direct instructional leadership action. Throughout the two year program numerous references were made by group members to the restricted role of the deputy principal. In some cases limitations were imposed by principals. For others, limitations appear to have been self-imposed. Regardless of the source, a number of group members were reluctant to become directly involved in areas such as performance management of teachers or managing school resources to reflect school priorities. The relative inexperience of group members provides another plausible explanation for the lack of instructional leadership action. Performance of routine administrative tasks is safer territory for deputy principals in their first or second year in a promotional position.

The absence of school vision or mission statements and well defined management information systems also constrained the deputy principals. In 1989 and 1990 few schools in the Narrogin District could claim to have either of these components of instructional leadership in place. It is understandable that deputies would be reluctant to intervene in the teaching-learning process without clearly defined student outcome statements to act as reference points to gauge teacher performance.

The majority of group members stated that during the period 1989-90 they had gained a significant increase in knowledge and skills in the areas of performance management, leadership styles, staff empowerment and delegation, leadership in resource management, and school development implementation.

The processes adopted during the validation session in 1991 gave group members the opportunity to reflect on the instructional leadership outcomes they had achieved from participating in the DPLDP. This retrospective assessment confirmed and clarified the original findings. The DPLDP group members identified twelve major specific positive outcomes (see Table 11).

Comments made by the deputies in 1991 indicate that their level of involvement in direct instructional leadership action had increased since 1989. Three deputies attributed this change in role to the outcomes of the DPLDP. For one



**TABLE 11**  
**Positive Outcomes from the DPLDP Identified by Group Members in 1991**

1. Increased knowledge of principles of learning.
2. Increased knowledge and skills in staff management and delegation
3. Heightened awareness of current educational issues.
4. Collegial support for group members
5. Increased knowledge of leadership strategies
6. Increased knowledge of adult learning strategies
7. Increased knowledge of change management
8. Interaction between primary and secondary deputy principals
9. Decrease in professional isolation.
10. Increased self assurance and confidence to act as an instructional leader.
11. Increased confidence to interact with peers.
12. Increased skills in school planning and organisation.

of these deputies the link was indisputable:

"The program (DPLDP) increased my knowledge and skills to act as an instructional leader. My confidence to act was increased through the interaction with other deputies in the group. I've demanded an enhanced role in the school because I know I can do the job."

Overall, the product evaluation shows that while the DPLDP has significantly increased the deputy principals' acceptance of instructional leadership as the primary focus of their role in school, the opportunities for them to exercise such leadership have been limited. However, the experience gained from these limited opportunities has increased commitment to the legitimacy and significance of this role.

## **Chapter 10**

# **CONCLUSIONS**

This final chapter draws together the various components of the investigation. The aims of the research and the strategies adopted are summarized as a precursor to the presentation of the study's conclusions.

### **THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH**

In this study the researcher set out to conduct an evaluation of the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program (DPLDP). It was confined to one group of deputy principals located in the Narrogin Education District during the period 1989-91. The research was also limited in terms of its focus - instructional leadership. In essence, the DPLDP was evaluated to determine the capacity of the program to enhance the instructional leadership skills of a group of nine deputy principals from schools in and around Narrogin.

By design, it was intended that this program evaluation will serve two main purposes. In the short term it will assist with decision making about the future of the DPLDP

in the Narrogin district. Longer term, it will contribute to the wider discussion concerning the professional development of deputy principals and, more specifically, the value of collegial support groups as a strategy for developing the capacities of school administrators.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

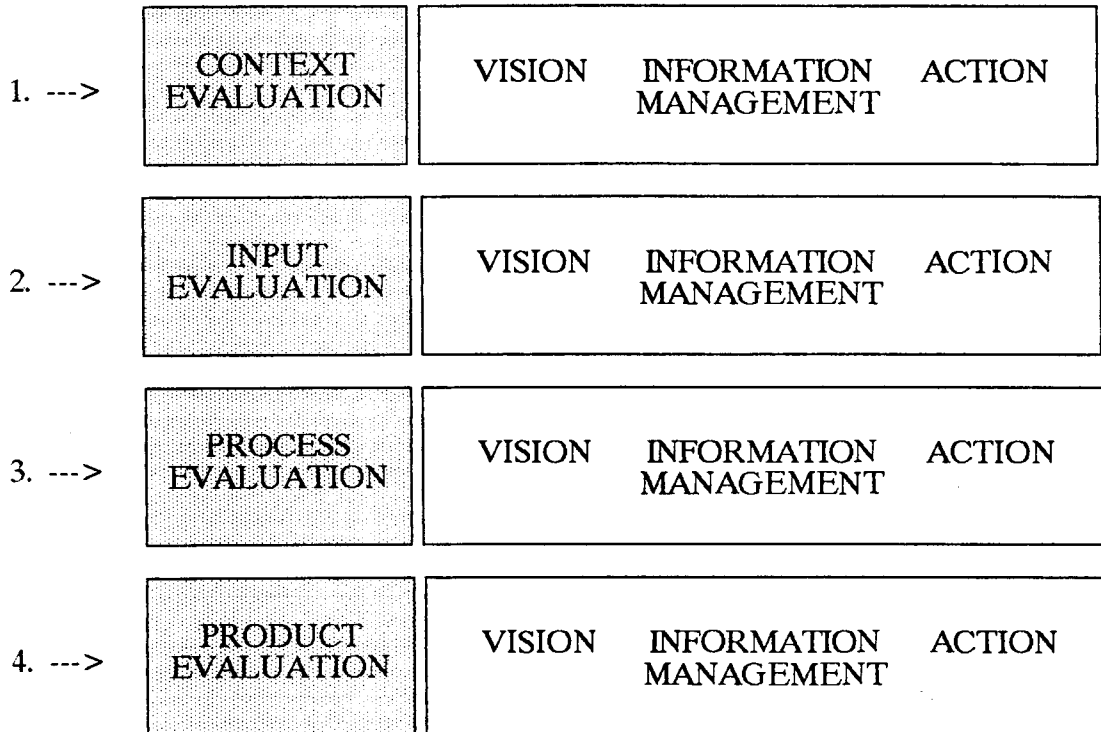
A range of techniques was used over a two year period to gather data for the evaluation. A massive amount of data was accumulated from eighty hours of participant observation, forty hours of informal discussion and semi-structured interviews, a substantial literature review and a six hour validation session.

Although these techniques lie largely within a qualitative research paradigm, the collection and analysis of data for the study was conducted within two sets of pre-determined frameworks - Stufflebeam's CIPP model of program evaluation and an instructional leadership typology constructed from the literature review. Figure 4 portrays how the two frameworks were combined to structure the analysis of the data.

At this point in time the Stufflebeam structure has served it's purpose. The conclusions to be drawn from the research findings can best be discussed by focussing directly on the capacity of the DPLDP to meet the instructional leadership needs of the deputy principals in

**FIGURE 4**

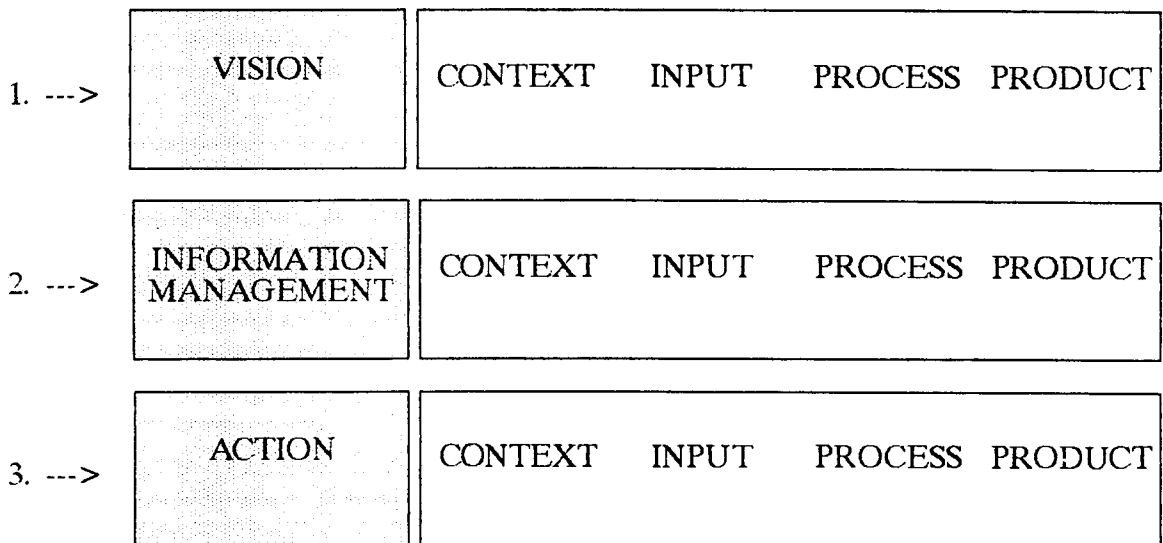
**Structure for Organising and Analyzing Data, and Presenting Research Findings**



the Narrogin group. The three part typology outlined in Figure 5 is used to structure the presentation of these conclusions.

**FIGURE 5**

**Structure for the Presentation of Research Conclusions**



## CONCLUSIONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE RESEARCH

Based upon the findings and the interpretation of data, the researcher has drawn the following conclusions.

1. The DPLDP is designed to increase deputy principals' understanding of vision as an essential component of instructional leadership. The program aims to increase the skills of deputy principals in setting, articulating and promoting school vision.

There is clear evidence that the DPLDP was developed to promote some of the basic principles to emerge from the effective school research. The program identifies instructional leadership as an essential element in effective schooling, and promotes the role of the deputy principal as a legitimate instructional leader.

Establishing and promoting a preferred vision of the school is highlighted as the critical first phase in the process of instructional leadership. This is consistent with current educational research in this field.

The structure and content of the program are designed to engage participants in an exploration of the practical aspects of establishing school vision as the precursor to more tangible aspects of instructional leadership.

2. Participation in the DPLDP leads to an understanding of, and a commitment to, the concept of vision as the basis for effective instructional leadership in schools. Further, the program develops in participants the skills required to develop and promote school vision.

Generally speaking, at the commencement of the program, members of the DPLDP group had only a limited understanding of the concept of school vision and the role of vision setting within a framework of instructional leadership. There was an awareness of terms like vision, purpose and mission entering the language of the Western Australian state education system. However, for most deputies, vision setting was regarded as a theoretical concept, with little direct relevance to everyday school life.

The further the program went, the more committed the deputy principals became to instructional leadership generally, and vision setting specifically. On numerous occasions group members came to realise that the practical elements of instructional leadership information management and action, like resource allocation, and teacher supervision, lacked meaning and purpose unless they were driven by a clear understanding of what the school was trying to achieve.

Genuine commitment to developing school vision came when group members had the opportunity to explore, in their individual school settings, the links between vision, curriculum and student outcomes.

Throughout the two year program, group members traded accounts of their experiences of taking instructional leadership action in schools. These exchanges often prompted useful discussions about the skills required to gain the commitment of school staffs (and in some cases, principals) to the concept of school vision. Furthermore, by the end of the second year, the majority of group members claimed to have made significant progress in their own schools towards an acceptance of the concept of school vision.

3. The DPLDP has the potential, more than other available programs, to meet the professional development needs of deputy principals in vision setting, articulation and promotion.

The research techniques employed in the input evaluation phase of this research failed to uncover any existing professional development strategy with the same potential as the DPLDP to increase the instructional leadership capacities of deputy principals.

Members of the DPLDP group systematically discounted a wide range of alternative sources of professional development as being inappropriate for developing the knowledge and practical skills necessary to promote school vision. University courses were deemed too theoretical, management programs were considered too removed from the school

environment, and conferences and short courses offered little scope for long term development. The DPLDP, on the other hand, was seen to provide the time, processes and collegial support necessary for meaningful change and development in this area of instructional leadership.

The objective analysis of alternative sources of professional development using the typology developed by Daresh and LaPlant also failed to identify a strategy that offers the positive features of the DPLDP.

4. The DPLDP is designed to enhance the capacities of deputy principals in a limited number of specific areas of school information management.

The rationale, objectives, content and processes of the DPLDP indicate that the program has been designed to expose participants to a number of important aspects of school information management. Moreover, the management of information about curriculum, student performance, and teacher performance, is highlighted as the means through which instructional leadership action can be directed towards the achievement of the school vision.

5. The DPLDP fails to address technical aspects of school information management. Other available professional development programs would better meet the needs of deputy



principals to develop skills in technical aspects of school information management.

The literature review established that a relevant and efficient Management Information System (MIS) is an essential component of the instructional leadership structure of an effective school. It is therefore reasonable to expect that an inservice program which claims to develop the instructional leadership capacities of school administrators would have the capacity to expose participants to the basic elements of an MIS. This is not the case with the DPLDP.

The input evaluation showed that alternative professional development strategies currently exist that focus on the structural and technical aspects of MIS design. Generic management courses and computer related programs have the potential to develop the capacities of deputy principals in this aspect of instructional leadership.

Unless individual members of a DPLDP group choose to focus specifically on the elements of a Management Information System (perhaps as part of the personal professional development planning component of the DPLDP), there is no guarantee that this aspect of instructional leadership will be addressed through participation in the DPLDP. In the case of the Narrogin DPLDP group, it was fortuitous that a decision was taken to allocate time in the second year of the program to examine Management Information Systems.

6. According to the participants, the DPLDP results in greater understanding and increased skills in specific areas of school information management.

The context and product evaluations clearly show that participation in the DPLDP brought about perceived changes in the way group members approached the tasks of gathering, analyzing, and utilizing information for decision making in schools. The deputy principals attributed to the program an increase in their skills in curriculum analysis, performance management of teachers, student assessment, and recording and reporting student performance.

7. The DPLDP is designed to increase the knowledge and skills of deputy principals in key areas associated with instructional leadership action.

The DPLDP is designed to encourage participants to examine and reflect upon accepted principles of learning, and to relate these principles to the curriculum and instruction practices in their schools. This emphasis on increasing knowledge and building skills in pedagogical methodology is entirely consistent with the findings of the literature review on instructional leadership. Contemporary literature highlights the importance, for school leaders, of building and maintaining a sound working knowledge of curriculum and instruction practice a basis upon which to take instructional leadership action.

The content and processes of the DPLDP encourage deputy principals to take action consistent with the instructional leadership role. Examination and re-examination of leadership style, change management strategies, staff management and staff development techniques are specific examples of DPLDP content that promote and encourage deputies to act and then examine the consequences of their actions.

8. The DPLDP has the potential, more than other available programs, to meet the professional development needs of deputy principals in key areas associated with instructional leadership action.

A number of the basic features of the DPLDP set it apart from other forms of professional development in terms of its ability to encourage and support deputy principals to develop the skills required to take instructional leadership action. The balance of theory and practice, spaced learning, collegial support, and the common frame of reference for participants (belonging to similar schools in the same education district) were all cited by group members as positive features unique to the program.

9. According to the participants, the DPLDP leads to a significant increase in knowledge and skills in key aspects of instructional leadership action.

The findings from the process and product evaluations show conclusively that during the first two years of the program, participants in the DPLDP considered they had developed a wide range of competencies required to act as instructional leaders in schools. These included an increase in knowledge about curriculum and instruction, development of skills in school planning and organisation, heightened awareness of change management strategies, increased knowledge and skills in staff management and delegation, and increased self assurance to act as an instructional leader.

For a number of group members, this increase in knowledge and skills brought with it an increase in frustration through a lack of opportunity to perform as an instructional leader in their current school. On numerous occasions individual deputies cited examples of leadership initiatives being blocked or discouraged by their principals or other staff members.

10. Outcomes from the second year of the program will invariably be influenced by the background and professional interests of the participants in each DPLDP group. The DPLDP cannot guarantee enhancement of instructional leadership capacities during the second year of the program.

The responsibility for selecting the content for the second year of the program rests entirely with the members of the DPLDP group. For this reason, the ability of the program to further explore the instructional leadership role, will vary from one group to another. In the case of the Narrogin group, a calculated decision was taken to use the eight sessions to examine in depth a range of issues which related directly to instructional leadership.

11. Participation in DPLDP leads deputy principals to examine and question their role in schools, and builds a commitment to their role as instructional leaders.

Towards the conclusion of the validation session, members of the DPLDP group were asked to identify specific outcomes from participating in the program. One deputy responded by saying, "... the ability to ask why". He went on to explain that the program had led him to seriously question the things he had been doing in his school, and to re-establish his priorities to coincide more closely with the instructional leadership role. This sentiment was echoed by a number of other group members, and was consistent with observations made by the DPLDP facilitator.

12. Collegial support is the single most important element of the DPLDP for the development of deputy principals as instructional leaders.

Throughout the course of the data gathering phase of this research, and again during the validation session, one feature of the DPLDP received constant attention and praise. That was the ability of the program to build and then sustain an atmosphere of genuine collegial support. For this DPLDP group, the trust and openness that developed during the getting started session and subsequent monthly sessions was the catalyst for much of the professional growth outcomes from the program.

Further, the group consistently praised the program as a means of enhancing professionalism and reducing the effects of professional isolation for school administrators based in smaller country schools.

13. The DPLDP can be implemented successfully in the Narrogin Education District without significant modifications.

Findings from the process evaluation show conclusively that the program is directly transferable from the North American context to the Narrogin education district. The DPLDP is flexible enough to allow participants, in conjunction with the program facilitator, to make minor modifications to enhance the potential of the program to meet the specific requirements of each group.

Logistically, the program is appropriate for the deputy principals in the Narrogin district, their schools, and the

Narrogin District Education Office. An inservice program spanning two or three years has the potential to place a heavy burden on the resources of schools, and inconvenience school based personnel. School principals, district office staff and the deputies involved in the DPLDP concluded that, in comparison with alternative programs, the program was cost effective.

The primary purpose of this research was to determine if there is justification for the continued use of the DPLDP as a means of enhancing the instructional leadership capacities of deputy principals in the Narrogin education district. This research concludes that the continued operation of the program can be justified for six specific reasons.

Participation in the DPLDP leads deputy principals to critically examine their role in their school, and more generally, within the education system. This is a process to be encouraged at a time when Western Australian schools are moving towards more self determining structures.

The view of instructional leadership promoted in the DPLDP is largely consistent with the contemporary analysis of the concept, as presented in the literature. There is a close correlation between the key elements of instructional leadership - vision, information management, and leadership action - and the content of the DPLDP.

No other inservice program currently available for Narrogin District deputies can match the DPLDP in terms of its ability to enhance the instructional leadership capacities of deputy principals.

The DPLDP can be implemented successfully in the Narrogin Education District, with little need for modifications to the original program.

Participation in the DPLDP leads to a range of positive outcomes for deputy principals and the schools they represent.

The DPLDP is a cost effective strategy for promoting instructional leadership in schools.

This research also qualifies the justification for continuing the DPLDP in four ways. Decision makers in the Narrogin Education District should be cautioned by these four conditions or factors.

The composition of DPLDP groups influences the degree to which the program is successful. The mix of backgrounds and personalities in any subsequent groups may result in different program outcomes.

Similarly, the consistency of membership of a DPLDP group may influence the outcomes from the program. The core group of the original Narrogin DPLDP group remained



constant for the three year period of the program. The annual cycle of transfers and promotions may influence the composition of new groups.

A suitably trained facilitator is critical for the successful operation of a DPLDP group. The availability of a facilitator for the duration of DPLDP program would need to be considered carefully.

The outcomes from the second year of any DPLDP program cannot be specified in advance by its 'sponsors'. The rationale for the program clearly promotes the empowerment of group members themselves to determine the general direction and specific content of the second year. This feature of the DPLDP may create some concerns for line managers with responsibility for the professional development of school administrators.

On balance, then, the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development Program can be justified for continuation in the Narrogin Education District.

The demonstrated effectiveness of the DPLDP is timely in view of other recent research findings on the role of deputy principals in Western Australian schools. In a high profile study commissioned by the Western Australian Primary Deputy Principals' Association, Harvey (1992) examines the changing role of the deputy. Four key

conclusions emerge from the study: as schools become more self determining there will be an increasing need for deputy principals to take on an educational leadership role; there is a growing acceptance (and, in many cases, a willingness), on the part of deputies, to assume educational leadership roles; the change in role focus will require many deputy principals to develop new skills and abilities; and deputies should seek opportunities for professional development which enhance their capacities as educational leaders.

Harvey's study highlights the importance of professional development that is focussed on instructional effectiveness rather than on organizational effectiveness. To meet the emerging needs of deputy principals, professional development must engage participants in critical analysis of their actions in schools. Deputies must be encouraged to gain new insights by comparing espoused theories with current practice.

The research reported in Harvey's study provides a rationale for developing the educational leadership capacities of deputy principals, and highlights the importance of authentic professional development based on reflective practice. On its own, this research has only limited capacity to influence the role of the deputy principal in Western Australian schools. The education profession and the school system must act to clearly endorse and support this new direction in order for real change to occur. While there is no political will to

determine a clear role for the deputy principal, the day-to-day work of these school administrators will continue to be based on uncertainties and best-guesses.

The DPLDP is a program that is well suited to prepare deputy principals to fulfil a role that is still to be endorsed.

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**APPENDIX 1****Themes for DPLDP Sessions - Year One**

**THEMES AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR DPLDP SESSIONS - YEAR ONE**

- \* Personal professional development planning
- \* Reflections on learning: principles and practices
- \* Reflections on learning: staff development
- \* Principles of adult learning: staff development models
- \* The role of the manager in change: creating, articulating and promoting a school vision
- \* Communication
- \* Change management - Concerns Based Adoption Model of Change Management (C-BAM)
- \* Professional development planning model
- \* Evaluation
- \* Planning for the second year of the DPLDP program

## APPENDIX 2

Letter to Members of the Narrogin DPLDP Group Inviting them  
to Participate in the Validation Session

Deputy Principal  
XXXXXX School

Dear

**RE: DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The next session of the Deputy Principals' Leadership Development program will be held at the Narrogin District Education Office on Wednesday 20th November, 1991. The main purpose of the day will be to complete the evaluation of the program as it has operated in the Narrogin district during the past three years.

The agenda for the day will be:

8.45am	coffee, fellowship	
9.00am	DPLDP activities	
	* focussing activity	
	* in-basket	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
	* "show 'n' tell"	
10.15am	Break	
10.30am	Evaluation of DPLDP (session 1)	Ron Chalmers
12.00	Lunch	
1.00pm	Evaluation of DPLDP (session 2)	Ron Chalmers
2.15pm	Break	
2.30pm	Evaluation of DPLDP (session 3)	Ron Chalmers
3.30pm	Close	

As you will recall from a previous session, the findings from my program evaluation (draft Master thesis, copy enclosed) will be used to provide a structure for this evaluation day. I need to make a few points about the evaluation process:

1. An important component of the methodology for this evaluation involves asking members of the group to comment on the findings presented in this draft thesis.
2. I am seeking your honest, candid reaction to this draft thesis. My aim is to complete a full and accurate

evaluation of the program. I need to know the parts of the thesis findings you agree with and the parts you disagree with. I need your criticisms, comments, and new perspectives. For this evaluation to be useful for future decision making, it is important that I obtain your thoughts on what is missing, what is incorrect, what is accurate and what is irrelevant.

3. I have mentioned on a number of occasions that anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout this evaluation process. Rest assured that these safeguards will continue for this last phase of the project.

4. Please use the page margins and the blank pages facing each text page to jot down your reactions. Don't worry about style. Scribbled notes and annotated text will provide me with useful information.

5. I hope to collect all copies of the draft thesis from group members at the conclusion of the evaluation session. Please bring this copy with you on the 20th November.

6. The draft thesis is a lengthy document and I am aware of the pressures that school administrators are under at this time of the school year. If you are unable to find the time to read the entire document, you are advised to browse the first two sections, then focus your attention on the Findings Section (pages 83-184). I think the Findings Section will be of interest to all group members as it contains a large number of quotes from the interviews conducted in 1989, 1990 and 1991.

7. To assist with the collection of information at the next session, it is proposed to use a tape recorder at certain stages. We can talk about the appropriateness (or otherwise) of this technique at the commencement of the session.

If you wish to discuss aspects of the thesis findings with me prior to the next session, or if the information presented in this letter requires clarification, please give me a call on 098-810135.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. I look forward to seeing you in a couple of weeks.

Kind regards

.....  
RON CHALMERS

5th November 1991

**APPENDIX 3****Extract from DPLDP Program Handbook**

## **Extract from DPLDP Program Handbook**

### **1. PROGRAM INFORMATION**

#### **2. Research and Theoretical Background**

##### **(a) Program Content**

There is a dearth of information available on appropriate content for assistant principal in -service. The Assistant Principals' Leadership Development Program, therefore, relies upon the content recommended for principal in-service as its source. One such source is Cawalti (1982). His "set of skills needed by contemporary administrators" is typical of many others and includes:

- (i) Training in leader behaviours (e.g. skills in building consensus, motivating people, using flexible leadership style).
- (ii) Training in management skills (e.g. skills in planning, organizing, directing, and controlling).
- (iii) Training in instructional leadership (e.g. skills in curriculum development, clinical supervision, staff development, teacher evaluation).
- (iv) Traditional (generic) administrative course topics (e.g. school finance, public relations, community involvement).

In the same article, Cawalti suggests that in -service programs need to be comprised of a balance between administrators' perceived needs and those perceived by someone else (e.g. the program developer based on system needs).

While Duke (1984) says that to maximize effectiveness it is beneficial to have a repertoire of leadership skills because no single leadership skill or set of skills is appropriate for all schools or all situations within a school, McCurdy (1983, p.10) contends that to exert instructional leadership, principals need to know:

- (i) how to organize and sustain an effective instructional program;
- (ii) the nature of the learning process and



curriculum practices;

- (iii) how to organize and carry out staff development;
- (iv) methods for implementing change and promoting continuity and stability in schools.

In addition to research and theory relative to instructional leadership, the Calgary Board of Education has a number of specific expectations for principals (Role of the Principal, 1983) which include:

- (i) having a strong, research-based view of teaching and learning and a clearly thought-out sense of what schools can and should do.
- (ii) obtaining consensus and commitment of both staff and community regarding the school's direction.
- (iii) enhancing staff development by intentionally and systematically assisting each member to develop his/her talents.

The content of this in-service program reflects both the specific recommendations and the spirit of the above theory and Board expectations.